













SIR JOHN LUSBOCK'S  
HUNDRED BOOKS

BERKELEY'S PRINCIPLES OF  
HUMAN KNOWLEDGE



Sir John Lubbock's Hundred Books

THE  
PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN  
KNOWLEDGE

BEING  
BERKELEY'S TREATISE  
ON THE NATURE OF  
THE MATERIAL SUBSTANCE  
(AND ITS RELATION TO THE ABSOLUTE)

*WITH A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE AND  
FULL EXPLANATIONS OF THE TEXT*

BY  
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GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS  
LIMITED

**Dedicated**

**TO**

**MY BELOVED DAUGHTER,**

Whose studies soon cleared up for her the *à priori* nature of this doctrine as well as its complete agreement with all our ordinary convictions, and whose vigorous criticisms have, through many happy years, assisted and encouraged me in my expositions of it.

**April, 1878.** c

## P R E F A C E.

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ONE special merit, to which this edition of Berkeley's great work lays claim, and whereby it is hoped here to conciliate the attention of an enlightened public, is that it is the only edition with explanations that has ever been prepared by an adherent of Berkeley's—*i.e.*, by one who undertakes to make quite clear the truth of the discovery promulgated in that remarkable production. All the other editions, both at home and abroad, are avowedly published by opponents of the doctrine, who acknowledge themselves unable to see its truth, or even, it would seem, the full purport of men's statements on the subject.

Nor is this all. Not only is the present the only edition made by an adherent of the doctrine, but the Editor is the only one of these adherents who has been found to raise his voice against the increasing misrepresentations of hostile editors and other adversaries. Strange as the fact may seem, he is the only English writer, as far as he is himself aware, and as far as our opponents appear to have been able to discover, who has, at any period since Berkeley's time, shown himself disposed, in this public and responsible manner, to point out to those unacquainted with the subject, what all acquainted with it now fully recognize—*viz.*, the complete reasonableness as well as *à priori* character of this doctrine,—a doctrine wholly limited, whatever some of our adversaries may assert, to the nature of material substances only; *i.e.*, to the nature of the Hard, the Heavy, and the Large. Here, then, is an additional advantage of the present edition. Its commentary embodies the

only explanations which, except those of Berkeley himself, are to be had anywhere, undertaking to point out the reasonableness and *à priori* nature of what is taught; and surely it is indispensable in the cause of truth and science that there should be some edition of Berkeley effecting this, when there are so many editions professing and labouring, both in Europe and America, to effect the contrary.

The edition, then, here offered to the English public has not only the exclusive advantage over all others, that it is the solitary edition ever published whose annotations undertake to explain all the supposed difficulties of the doctrine, but also the further recommendation that these annotations are written by the only adherent who has ever written any,—the only one whom, hitherto, the misrepresentations current (intentional or unintentional) have led to break silence in defence of the master spirit who first gave this doctrine to us,—the only adherent, it would seem, who has had the leisure as well as the disposition, and who, in the cause of science, has seen the need, to embark in the task (in the responsibility, if you will) of enabling all to comprehend the nature of the discovery, as well as the scientific demonstration of its truth. And that the adherents who have explained the doctrine should not have been many,—nay, that there should have been but one,—can excite no wonder; nor need we have wondered, even had there been none; for, in the first place, the founder himself expounds the whole principle of matter's phenomenal nature, in this his chief work, with an amount of detail and an anticipation of objections that, for the unbiassed and careful reader, even if he be not a scientific man, leaves nothing to be desired, although the language is often that peculiar to the author's own period, and sometimes almost mediæval. In the second place the question is really confined wholly to scientific men, who are less easily deceived upon the facts than others are by the frivolous misrepresentations here ordinarily employed, and who would therefore require fewer explanations; which circumstance, of course, alone would account for the exposi-

tors being few, none of whom at all would have been necessary if there never had been any misleading ones. But besides this, although the discovery, it is true, needs for most people no explanation beyond a distinct and honest statement, it nevertheless, for others, needs explanations involving metaphysical and even physical distinctions not commonly understood, to say nothing of the obscure and technical language habitually used in all such distinctions; and, for another class of 'thinkers,' the question has been so preposterously complicated by mis-statements and misconceptions of the most grotesque description, that no expositor or commentator can almost ever hope to rescue these so-called philosophers from the ignorance in which they themselves unconsciously profess to be immersed upon this subject.

All the other writers who, in England, have hitherto volunteered either as authors or editors to explain to their readers what that transcendent intellect found exact in science, on this question, and conformable to our ordinary convictions, soon unconsciously acknowledge themselves entirely unfitted for the task—outirely unable to discern, even for themselves, either the general reasonableness or the necessary truth of the proposition. They tell us, and in general pretty frankly, that they are only able to discover that the thing taught *must be* something in some way or other devoid of all reasonableness, since they cannot understand it. But how then, one might naturally ask, can such persons have pretended to be expositors? Critics, surely, is all they can aspire to be. Except for the purposes of discussion, opponents cannot be expositors; nor even can they be, to any useful purpose, commentators. In their physical or metaphysical investigation of our problem, all these conscientious men come at last to a point at which they are obliged to decide either that they are blockheads or that Berkeley is one; either that they must be singularly stupid not to understand his proposition—*i.e.*, not to see its reasonableness—or he singularly stupid to have



supposed it reasonable. Even conscientious men, on these occasions, seldom hesitate; the Berkeleian critic, never. All sorts of amiable palliations and excuses are devised for Berkeley's want of discernment, with all its supposed oversights, misapprehensions, and blunderings. Their own is never even suspected. With such a result of their studies, the natural conduct would have been, one might suppose, to leave it for others to explain the principle in question, and to limit themselves either to discussion, if they cared for the truth, or to the mere fault-finding of the critic, if they did not. But instead of this, the 'vaulting ambition' of these critical philosophers 'o'erleaps itself,' and they proceed to explain what they admit they cannot understand.

Now when we desire to understand what another person means by any statement he makes (*i.e.*, to understand not only his proposition, but also his grounds for considering it true), and cannot by ourselves discover this, it would be thought strange that we should ask some third party to explain it to us, who himself admits that he does not understand it. In other words, if we cannot ourselves see the truth of a doctrine, it seems more natural that we should ask some one to point this out to us who is himself able to discern it, than that we should go to some one to do this for us who candidly acknowledges to us that he cannot himself see it. This would seem to be a mere case of the blind asking the blind to lead him. It is to meet this requirement of common sense that the present edition and its expositions are offered to the world.

That there should be persons who, for no purpose of discussion, but merely for the pecuniary profit or literary distinction of being thought to criticise a scientific work of the highest order, habitually proceed to interpret Berkeley's 'Principles of Human Knowledge,' not in his sense, but in their own (*i.e.*, in one that they can cavil at), and who undertake, moreover, to indicate to others his grounds and reasons, although they well know beforehand, and afterwards admit, that they really can see none of these,—all

this is clearly conduct that courts harsh epithets, being, at least, in the last degree unfair, not only towards one whom even most of these writers will admit to be their superior in mental prowess, but also towards all those who honestly endeavour to understand these reasons. That they should have acted in this way as a challenge to us, and in order to provoke us to state what we mean in language as simple as their understandings may require—in short, for the honourable purpose of discussion—would have been fair enough and not uncandid, nor in any way objectionable. In fact, whatever were the real motive, it would have been highly in the interests of science that this should have been done. But to have taken upon them to explain reasons which they admit they are incompetent to see, and (for no purpose of scientific and responsible discussion, but merely for some personal object) to represent their own sense of the author's words as the one which he intended—doing this in secret, or, still worse, in public whenever they knew there could be no immediate contradiction, and with the announced intention of refusing all discussion of what they may choose to say—this seems to be as severe a reproach as Science could almost make against any of her labourers. It is, however, a statement respecting these opponents of Berkeley's which, whether they consider it a reproach or not, none of them will consider unjust. They all profess to explain the doctrine, yet all admit that Berkeley understands it differently from what they do. They all profess to point out the reasons why Berkeley holds the doctrine to be *à priori*; yet they all acknowledge that they see none of these reasons. They all make their hostile statements *where* and *when* they know there is no possibility of there being any contradiction. They all refuse discussion, and are all voluminous writers, constantly treating of the doctrine. These are the alleged facts, and the opponents in question deny none of them, nor deny that they are opponents. This latter fact, which they rarely seek to conceal is, where not distinctly stated, easily

gathered from the disparaging language in which the doctrine or the founder is spoken of by the few writers in question (and, really, how few and how timid these critics are!) when they venture upon any statement connected with their superior knowledge of nature, mingled though this disparagement generally is with some frivolous terms of adulation. But all that has been said applies only to these few critics. These 'expositors' are the only opponents; and even they would, probably, not be opponents if it were not in order to be 'expositors.' Their senseless opposition (which has its parallel in the opposition maintained for so long a time by a few writers against the Copernican system and the Circulation of the blood) must not mislead us into supposing that the doctrine is not now fully recognised and fully understood by the great majority of scientific men who have made the study of it. None of these ever now come forward as our opponents. And even the few opponents above alluded to present themselves to us in a thoroughly Quixotic character. They appear only to have quarrelled with their own misinterpretation of the doctrine—not with the doctrine itself. Nay, they sometimes seem so headlong in their criticism of this misrepresentation that they almost seem to wish to put the doctrine forward as their own in opposition to it, apparently quite unconscious that this is the very interpretation of nature which they are then and there themselves so ignorantly and violently condemning.

It would hardly be fair, perhaps, to the reader uninitiated in the circumstances of this one-sided controversy, not to give here an example of the sort of misconceptions which these opponents impute to Berkeley, taken (consciously or unconsciously) out of the storehouse of their own convictions, under the impression that, since they themselves hold these tenets, all must hold them; and seeking therewith to disparage his doctrine, by making it appear that these notions are a portion of it, as they seem to believe they are; and constantly even by saying that they are so.

I shall give then four instances here of this (to say the least of it) very peculiar conduct. (1.) Some of the 'expositors,' in question, describe our doctrine as teaching the intermittent existence of material things; which means that a chair has no weight in it until you lift it, nor your face any shape, or size, or colour, in it, until some one comes to look at it. This is the commonly received theory of our opponents themselves, and they impute it to us. It is one, however, that we entirely deny. (2.) Others describe us as teaching that material things have no real existence at all,—not even an intermittent one; that what we see and feel is never real. This also is merely the common doctrine of our opponents. It is no part whatever of ours. We hold that there is nothing more real than what we see and feel around us. (3.) Some say that what we teach is contrary to common sense and the ordinary convictions of mankind;—as, for instance, that all we see and feel is within our heads,—even our heads themselves within themselves! This extravagant,—let us say rather,—insane notion, is what our little band of opponents assert, and what we, with all the rest of the world, deny. (4.) Finally, others describe our discovery on the nature of material substances, of a millstone for instance, to be something to the effect that the world is constructed upon principles of intelligence; but these commentators insist that Berkeley entirely failed to establish, by means of the millstone, or by any other means, this 'alleged' great discovery, in which he had, he imagined, anticipated all other thinkers!

Is it too much to hope that the discerning reader, even unacquainted with the subject in dispute, will easily see, in such nonsensical objections, pretty clear evidence that the doctrine is true, which can only be so attacked? and the hollowness (where it is not insincerity) of this opposition becomes more evident when it is known that the three first of the above notions imputed to us are (as has been mentioned) tenets of our adversaries themselves, not ours at all; but, on the contrary, utterly denied by us, and only imputed.

to us by them because they know these to be unpopular notions, and because, since they themselves hold them, they fancy that *all* scientific men must hold them; while the fourth of these imputed theories illustrates that stratagem elsewhere alluded to, whereby these adversaries, when conscious of their inability to refute the doctrine on the nature of the material substance, and often even to understand it, deny that such is at all the doctrine of Berkeley, and seek to make it appear that his doctrine was really something else, as, here, the existence of a supreme Intelligence. Our opponents, of course, never allude to these preposterous notions as their own, except under cover of the obscurest possible technical language, however liberally they impute them to us in the plain terms in which they appear above; —notions, which, all thoughtful people will admit, indicate, in those who hold them, no very high class of intelligence, nor any remarkable progress, upon the part of such persons, either in their physical or metaphysical studies.

It only remains to be observed that Berkeley's Treatise, intended originally to be divided into Parts, naturally divides into three such Parts; and each of these Parts as naturally into Chapters;—the first Part into three Chapters, and the other two Parts into two Chapters each. These divisions have therefore been adopted in this edition, to assist the reader in selecting for his study the different portions of the work.

The numbered Sections of the original editions have been, of course, retained for the purpose of reference, to which they are so well adapted.

C. S.

GIPSY HILL, *July*, 1878.

A SYNOPSIS  
OF THE  
SUBJECTS TREATED OF UNDER EACH SECTION  
CONTAINED IN  
THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

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PART I.

*The Summary and Exposition of the whole Doctrine.*

CHAPTER I.

SECTIONS.

- 1—2. The Summary. The whole doctrine respecting phenomena and percipients.

CHAPTER II.

*Of Sensible Objects or Sense-phenomena.*

3. Sensible qualities or sense-phenomena, grouped or otherwise, depend on sense and life and mind for their nature and essence, but on their own laws for their existence.
4. The question respecting insensible matter always exclusively limited to the scientific; but not general even among these. Sensuous objects, irrespective of sense and life, impossible.
5. The error here of scientific men originates in their abstract ideas, as well as in their notion that the sensible universe is inside the head, which obliges them to suppose something real outside it.
6. Difference between Essence and Existence; Existence implying Essence, but Essence not implying Existence.
7. The immaterial entity or spirit is the *sine quâ non* condition.

## SECTIONS.

(often on that account vaguely called 'substance') of all the sense-phenomena.

8. The sense-phenomena of course exist literally outside the group of them called the head, but cannot in any sense exist *outside* the mind. Outside the head and outside the mind express facts entirely different from one another.
9. All other sensible qualities are external to those which constitute the head, and all of them are incapable of existing unsupported by (*i.e.*, external to) mind, or percipient nature.
10. What sort of size is insensible size—the size of a mere idea for instance? Or what sort of shape is that which is the shape of nothing? Abstract size or abstract shape? Can there exist in nature such a thing? or in imagination?
- 11—15. Further thoughts on things abstract; on things which are not particularly anything; on the shape, size, number, and motion for instance which could be found in nature without being a definite size, a definite shape, a definite number, and definite motion.
- 16—17. What we mean by a 'substratum' or prop, which prevents material qualities from falling down or at least from being scattered, although it is itself devoid of all material qualities. Here a sort of invisible pincushion. What 'material substance' or 'material substratum' possible which does not consist of sensible qualities?
- 18—20. The sensible or material universe and its sensible objects—the external sense-phenomena—with their laws, are all we want. Why suppose an immaterial insensible universe full of insensible objects, outside and beyond this sensible material universe?
21. Our *à priori* argument sufficient without adducing, in corroboration of it, the mischiefs to science resulting from this error of the scientific.
- 22—24. A sensuous (*i.e.*, sensible) object of any kind (a sensuous universe therefore or a stone) implies life and mind, and sense. We only know it as a mental thing, as a *perception*, whether it exists or not. When we speak of pain, we never mean the sort of pain that could exist unfelt; and so also of that external sense-phenomenon which we call the sensible universe or the sensible house.

## CHAPTER III.

*Of that which Causes and Perceives.*

- 25 A phenomenon (or idea) cannot originate or perceive any-

**SECTIONS.**

- thing. This is also true therefore of *all* the sense-phenomena—of all sensuous, *i.e.*, material qualities, and all groups of such.
26. That therefore which perceives and causes is insensible and non-phenomenal, *i.e.*, is immaterial. We call it spirit—the only immaterial nature known to us—the percipient of phenomena.
27. As an idea or phenomenon can in no case think, it can in no case represent that which does; *i.e.*, it can in no case represent a spirit or thinking being. The spirit can therefore have among its ideas no image presented to it of another spirit, but a knowledge or notion only of it, as a thing similar in nature to itself. Each spirit infers other spirits and their phenomena. It is conscious of itself and its own.
- 28—29. All the elementary phenomena presented to the Ego are presented (*i.e.*, rendered discernible or perceptible) by the same agent, *viz.*, the Absolute; their groupings however, and the occasions of them have, to a considerable extent, we are conscious, their origin in the Ego itself. We refer therefore to an immaterial origin also, even the groupings and changes of which we are not conscious.
- 30—31. Laws of nature. What we mean by this expression.
32. Secondary Causes not interfered with by this doctrine.
33. Difference between what is real and what is unreal;—between our external ideas of sense and their groups on the one hand, and those ideas on the other hand which are not external ideas of sense, nor even ideas of sense at all.

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PART II.

*Fourteen Objections alleged against our denial of the Unknown, Insensible Universe with its Unknown, Insensible Objects which are supposed by our opponents to exist beyond the Sensible Universe; with Berkeley's Reply to each Objection.*

CHAPTER I.

*Twelve alleged Objections on grounds of Science, Theism, and Common Sense.*

**SECTIONS.**

- 34—40. The only real material substance is said by our opponents to be insensible, non-phenomenal, and without any material quality or attribute whatever.
41. No difference made by us, they say, between a sensible object



## SECTIONS.

- (or sense-idea, sense-phenomenon) and our 'mere idea' of such (between pain for instance, and our idea of pain) because we call them both 'ideas,' and both 'phenomena.'
- 42—44. Our opponents say that they assume unseen sizes and unseen spaces outside the sensible universe and the mind, because they think that all seen sizes and seen spaces, as well as all felt sizes and felt spaces, are within our skulls, and therefore not real,—not even possible; merely imaginary.
- 45—48. They also say that when we leave the room, we, according to *their* theory, take away with us all its light and all its colours, both because they think we have those within our skulls, and because they think that such things can only exist while some one is looking at them. For which reason, they are, they say, compelled to suppose other more real things.
49. Some have argued against us that if extension exists in a group of qualities in the spirit (*i.e.* as a thing dependent on the spirit) as we say it does, the spirit must thereby become extended.
50. Some say that the unknown matter which has none of the qualities of matter, has helped to explain so many difficult questions, and the unknown movement of this unknown kind of immaterial matter has always explained so much, that we cannot now dispense with it, utterly unintelligible though it is.
- 51—53. One objection made is that we exclude secondary causes since, according to us, the Absolute produces not only the universe but also every minutest change that takes place in it.
- 54—55. Our scientific opponents tell us that even the peasant sees the necessity of the invisible something without material qualities, which is, they think located within his plough, and of the insensible universe outside the sensible one.
- 56—57. The ninth argument in favour of their insensible and unintelligible material universe (without our known material qualities) in addition to the sensible one, is that, if the notion so prevalent in Berkeley's time, of there being this insensible universe, originated in mere prejudice its origin could have been pointed out; which it has not been.
- 58—59. It is objected that, according to our doctrine, what is not seen nor felt does not exist, as for instance the other side of the moon, or the centre of the earth, or the earth's rotundity. This is really a repetition of the 4th objection (see sections 45—48).

SECTIONS.

60—66. It is said that, without the insensible matter in question, all growth and mechanism are superfluous.

67—81 Theists object strongly to this doctrine on the ground that it leaves the Supreme Cause too helpless—that the supposed insensible universe would greatly aid the divine action in the production of our sensible one; nay, that this action would be impossible for the Supreme Spirit without some such assistance, were it only as a reminder of what has to be done. These Theists clearly consider that the immaterial or insensible matter is not a physical impossibility—not self-contradictory—and therefore, even if not actually wanted upon scientific grounds, may yet, they think, be conceded by scientific men on account of its theistic uses.

CHAPTER II.

*Two Objections on so-called 'Christian' Grounds; but are they really Christian Grounds?*

82—83. Many 'Christians' (as they call themselves) regard it as a great objection to this doctrine, that, in Scripture, the expression 'bodies' always means, they think, *objects without any material qualities*, the very kind of 'bodies' which Berkeley denies.

84. Other 'Christians' are shocked at Berkeley's doctrine, because the miracles which change one thing into another in Scripture, never mean, they say, any other change than that of a certain supposed invisible something *hidden* within one visible object, into something else equally invisible *hidden* in the other visible object.

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PART III.

*Definitions and Illustrations on various points of Physics and Metaphysics connected with the discovery that the Material Substance is Phenomenal.*

CHAPTER I.

*Of Material Bodies and Material Qualities; also of other kinds of Phenomena.*

SECTIONS.

85. The great advantage of knowing exactly the nature of the material substance of the universe, and of thus perceiving

## SECTIONS.

- the whole of the relation between the human body and the human spirit.
- 86—88. Advantage of a doctrine that gives a precise meaning to our words, and a certainty to what we already know.
89. What ideas might more properly be termed 'notions,' and to what else the term 'notion' or 'knowledge' applies here.
90. In what senses we say objects are 'external;' the least understood, yet most usual expression throughout the whole work.
91. What we mean by saying that there cannot be an unperceiving support or substance for a sensation or other sensible quality.
- 92—96. The ground is here cut away from beneath the feet of materialists of all classes.
- 97—100. The obstructions to science resulting from the confusion connected with abstract terms.
- 101—117. Bearing of the new doctrine upon some details of natural philosophy.
- 118—134. Its bearing upon some points of mathematics.

## CHAPTER II.

*Of Percipient Nature and of the Immaterial Beings called Spirits.*

135. We know the nature of a spirit as completely and intimately as we know that of an idea (phenomenon), and no idea can exist without the condition, aid, support, or 'substance,' as it is called, of a spirit.
136. What a new sense would do for us.
- 137—140. Objections to the assertion that although each spirit has itself as a sort of image or representation of other spirits, its ideas cannot ever represent, or be the images of, other spirits. That which cannot think cannot represent that which can, nor can that which cannot act be an image of something acting.
141. The natural immortality of the soul, or the spirit's freedom<sup>c</sup> from the body's death, seen to be for scientific men an *a priori* principle of nature.
142. Further remarks on the use of the term 'idea' instead of 'knowledge' or 'notion.'
143. Some special evils of abstraction in the case of metaphysics.
144. Figurative language, also, and Analogy great obstacles to scientific accuracy.

**SECTIONS.**

145. Just as we know, only by inference, other ideas beside our own, so we know also, only by inference, the existence of other spirits besides ourselves.
146. In this way also (viz. by inference) we know the existence of the Absolute, or Supreme Being, acting as a Spirit.
- 147—149. But this inference is made with so much evidence of this spiritual action as greatly to exceed the evidence that we have of any Being that is merely a Spirit.
- 150. The *argumentum ad hominem* addressed by Berkeley to the Christians of his own time, who attacked his discovery, for bringing the action of the Supreme Spirit too near them.
- 151—154. A few remarks on the presence of 'defects' in nature physical and moral.
- 155—156. A more accurate knowledge in Physics would make men happier. To aid in bringing about this greater accuracy and greater happiness has been the object of this *Treatise on 'The Principles of Human Knowledge'*

**END OF SYNOPSIS.**



## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

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THE great fact of nature discovered by Berkeley through all the vast entanglements of the Physics and Metaphysics of his day,—the famous doctrine propounded by him in the following treatise on the 'Principles of Human Knowledge,'—is simply and singly the one proposition, that **MATTER IS A PHENOMENON**,—*φαινόμενον τι*,—a thing manifest in sense,—not inferred,—not a thing rendered probable, or possible, or necessary, by what we find thus manifest in sense. In other words, the doctrine is that the material substance of nature is not, as was previously supposed, something invisible and intangible, inferred from what we see and feel, producing and grouping what we see and feel, but that it is itself, on the contrary, in each case, great or little, the very thing which we see and feel,—itself the very phenomenon to which it was supposed to have given rise.

Many writers, it is true, have tried to make it appear that the proposition is different from this; but it is not. Either from a real incapacity to understand the very simple proposition itself (which I believe to be the more general reason) or in order the more plausibly to have the distinction of descrying errors in an author of universally acknowledged prowess, or from an unwillingness (alas, too frequent) to be known to acquiesce in a doctrine rejected by the rest of their clique, or from some literary grudge against the founder of the doctrine either on the ground of his own profession, or on that of his intermeddling with a profession not his own;—from one or other of these motives, many writers have sought to make it appear that Berkeley's

proposition is something else,—something, in fact, quite different,—something often such even as to make it far from clear what these writers wish to say the proposition is. Accordingly we have, nowadays, some half-dozen cavillers engaged in a pretty brisk campaign against our great British Metaphysician. But let the reader not be deceived upon this point, nor by this circumstance. The proposition is that stated above, neither more nor less, and is now fully recognized as true by all the more distinguished men of science in our country, whatever further may be the theory which some of these imagine they can deduce from it, and which they strangely consider themselves, for that reason, justified in attributing to Berkeley as his proposition and his doctrine. The whole of his discovery is contained in the one proposition, viz., that matter is a Phenomenon, *i.e.*, consists wholly of sensible qualities; and this proposition, I repeat, there is not one among us now prepared to deny, however sedulously and feebly,—nay often with little dignity, some who find themselves committed to other statements, may seek to shuffle out of the great fact, in a sufficiently plausible way, under the shelter of a few vague words and vaguer phrases. All such prevaricators, as well as any sincere opponents that we have, are sufficiently exposed to the judgment of the public by the fact that they either refused to write for the prize in 1848, or refuse now to engage in a public discussion of their objections, as well as by the fact that none of them invite a discussion of their own doctrine with a prize of their own, or even without one.

Berkeley's great discovery, then, on the nature of the material substance, is, that it is a Phenomenon, as pain is, or as our knowledge is, but often hard and often heavy, always of some size,—a thing therefore not inferred from anything;—on the contrary, a most familiar object, which consists of elements of whose existence our nature is as conscious as it is of anything, and which we do not, therefore infer from some other fact of nature, nor require to

infer. The substance which we call 'matter' is, according to this doctrine, a group or congeries of sensible qualities,—(sense-perceptions or sense-phenomena,—ideas of sense) and the group itself is the substratum of its own qualities,—that of which each sensible quality is a part, and that which each quality really and unequivocally qualifies. The whole material universe of strata and nebulae, is in every fragment of it, thus composed of this sort of phenomenal substance, disposed and regulated, as this substance is, by what we all agree to call 'the laws of nature.'

This, it does not seem too much to say, is the common doctrine of mankind, or, if we must so put it, of human experience. Even the peasant admits that the material substance of his spade or plough is what he sees and what he feels,—not something which produces that, nor yet something which is to be inferred from that. His material universe is the one manifest in sense.

He admits, moreover, that all that he sees and feels in his plough, its weight, and firmness, and shape, and size, and colour are all real things, and not 'mere ideas' in his own mind. The plough which he *sees* and *feels* is not only not inferred, but it is a real object. Here, also, the peasant agrees with us and we with him. But that is not all. He also agrees with us that his plough exists all night precisely as it was in the daytime, when he was holding it and looking at it, and that even when he is only looking at it, it is still just as hard and heavy as it was while he held it. Its existence is not intermittent and dependent on his presence. Finally he agrees with us that his plough lying there, twenty yards from him, is outside his head;—that its weight and solidity, and shape, and size, and colour, are all outside the colours of his head, and that there is a distance of twenty yards between the colours of his head and the colours of his plough. Thus not only in his immediate perception of it and in its reality, but also in the permanence of its existence, and in its externality the peasant is agreed with us about his plough, as well as about all the other sensible objects of



the universe; and so also are agreed with us, in these important particulars, all the world, except the few physiologists and other theorists who oppose us.

It will conduce much to the understanding of our doctrine that the reader should be made acquainted with the doctrine opposed to this of ours, which ours has replaced or, if you prefer the expression, is replacing, and which is, in all respects, the contrary of ours. This doctrine is that *matter is not a phenomenon*,—that matter is not that which we see and feel, but an unknown something to be inferred logically from what we see and feel,—itself unseen, unfelt, and unextended, without weight, and without hardness, but to be thought of as producing, and as underlying all that is felt, and seen, and extended, and hard, and heavy. This unknown thing called ‘matter’ by our opponents, and by them described as the great reality of nature, is admitted by them to be not only unknown, but even something unintelligible, without any shape, or any size, or any other quality of what we commonly call ‘matter;’—therefore really something immaterial, and more like what we call ‘spirit;’—something therefore in itself entirely inaccessible to the senses,—something utterly invisible and intangible, and as unextended as a mathematical point.

There exists among our opponents a good deal of dissension in their efforts to settle what a mathematical point, or a matter-point like this, can be supposed to do, of what use it is, and what evidence we have of its existence. The more eminent among them, however, admit that they have no possible means of knowing that the *point* in question could, even if it existed, produce anything that we see or feel, as it was once supposed it could,—that the only use they can think of for it, is that it is perhaps the substratum of the sensible qualities in each object, and that they have no other evidence of its presence anywhere, except this possible use. There are, however, three obvious objections to it in this capacity,—all fully recognized even by our opponents themselves. One is that a mathematical point

could not be a support or substratum to the qualities of an object, even if it could be advantageously placed for that purpose. It is also admitted that, from the nature assigned to this unextended 'matter,' it could not possibly exist *with* the sensible qualities of objects where they are known to exist, and could not therefore, on that account also, be their support, substance, or substratum. Finally, it is admitted by all of them, or most of them, that on this same ground of its supposed peculiar nature, this matter-point for each object of sense can not only not be combined with the group of sensible qualities, but can only be assigned a position beyond the precincts of the sensible Universe, *i.e.* beyond all that we see and feel—beyond the most distant lights of heaven. But it is very clear that, from that remote position, nothing could be the support or substratum of sensible qualities existing in the centre of this sensuous system.

It will naturally be asked what could be the origin of so absurd a notion? and it may be well to mention this at once, in addition to what will be found on the subject in Sections 56 and from 73 to 81 of the following treatise. It was thought before Berkeley's time that a millstone produced sensations within our minds, as we have ideas within our minds, and that, from those sensations, we inferred the existence of the millstone. But Berkeley pointed out that the millstone itself consisted of the very sensations and their qualities which it was previously supposed to excite within our minds, all which qualities together constitute that bulky, round, hard, and heavy group of qualities called a millstone, and that this interpretation of nature applies to our own bodies and heads as well as to the millstone. All such things exist in our mind, *i.e.*, are mental things or phenomena; and mental things, or sense-phenomena, as all metaphysicians well know, can be as hard, and heavy, and big as necessary.

This discovery puzzled the unmetaphysical world, for whom 'to be within the mind' only meant 'to be within

the head,' because it is their common conviction that the mind itself is lodged within the bones of the skull. The immediate result of the new discovery was that the more active physiologists began to devise all the means possible for keeping some little part of the millstone out of the mind, for that with them was synonymous with keeping it out of the skull. For some time it was thought that the shapes and the sizes of things, and their solidity—even *the Hard and the Heavy*—could be kept out, and, as will be seen, great efforts were made. But for the deeper thinkers the end was rapid. It was soon seen that even these qualities were entirely mental things—sense-phenomena—and that sense-phenomena (millstones, for instance) are among the most real of all the things known to us, although the denomination is not one with which we are very familiar. The bewilderment, then, of the first hour continued to the last. The conclusion was irresistible. It is impossible that the whole sensible Universe should be lodged within the skulls of men. And finding thus that they had to surrender the whole millstone bit by bit, and to acknowledge that it is all—aye, and the whole sensible Universe—within the mind, or, as they believed these words to mean, within the head—even the head itself within itself—they have been at last reduced to this ridiculous hypothesis of an immaterial something—a sort of matter-point in vast numbers beyond the nebulæ, one of which points is to be regarded as substratum for the sensible qualities of each sensible object in the sensible universe. One or two of these infatuated writers do not scruple to tell us that it would be 'the summit of human wisdom' in us not to deny the existence of this immaterial matter-point beyond the nebulæ; yet admit frankly that they have not the smallest evidence of its use or of its existence, either there or anywhere.

It is worth remarking here that this is a full recognition on the part of our most inveterate opponents that our doctrine is an *à priori* truth, and that the sensible universe is of a phenomenal nature. They here admit this, and

merely occupy themselves in constructing an insensible one, outside it, beyond it, and independent of it.

There are six important facts that the reader has here to attend to in order to understand what we and our opponents say upon this subject:—

1. That a phenomenon as well as an idea can be round and big, and as hard and heavy as a millstone. This sort of idea is called by metaphysicians a sense-phenomenon, or idea of sense (as often in Berkeley), also a sensuous or sensible object. Although termed in science ‘an idea,’ it is not, we see, the idea of anything, being itself the *original* natural object.

2. That the mind is not within the head, as our opponents think it is, but, on the contrary, the head, being a sensible or sensuous object, is within the mind.

3. That the sensible universe is within the mind, with all the sensible objects, and spaces, and vast distances that constitute its contents.

4. That for this reason, ‘to be within the mind’ and ‘to be within the sensible Universe,’ or the universe of the senses, mean the same thing; as also ‘to be outside or external to the mind,’ and ‘to be outside or external to the sensible Universe,’ mean here the same thing.

5. That the sense-Universe, although within the mind, is not within the small portion of itself which is called the head, as our opponents think it is. This Universe is, on the contrary, outside and around the head, at all its own vast distances.

6. That ‘to be outside the head’ and ‘to be outside the Universe of sense,’ do not mean the same thing; since the head itself is within the Universe of sense. Most of our opponents hold that these two phrases have here the same import; and in this way they bewilder themselves and misrepresent us.

A statement of the doctrine similar to that already given, but differently expressed, is that even in the most solid and real things—in stone and iron, for instance—there is no

substratum wrapped up that can be described as in itself devoid of material qualities, *i.e.*, no substratum that can be called immaterial, yet used as the subject or substratum of the material qualities—no unextended something wholly exempt from all visibility and from all tangibility, such as was formerly supposed to exist in every group of these material or sensible qualities.

As most of our opponents admit this—as most of them admit that there is, and could be, no such insensible and immaterial substratum of qualities within the sensible universe (*i.e.*, within the phenomenal substances of the sensible universe), or, as they express this, within the mind and head, but nevertheless assert that something of this kind is probably to be met with beyond the remotest limits of the sensuous Universe, and therefore outside all mind—this statement of the doctrine requires to be further enlarged as follows :—

Berkeley's doctrine is to the effect that there not only is no insensible substratum of this kind wrapped up in the phenomenal or sensible universe, or in any of its substances or objects, but that, for the sensible qualities of this universe and its objects, there is no such substratum as this, even beyond the precincts of this universe, because, so situated, it could not be substratum to the sensible qualities and sensible groups (or objects) within the Universe, however well adapted an insensible point might otherwise perhaps be for such a purpose. The distances involved would alone render absurd any such hypothesis as that here so groundlessly proposed by our opponents.

Another statement of our doctrine is obtained through the details of a notion just alluded to. It is, as I have just said, an opinion still very prevalent among physiologists (and a great obstacle to their comprehension of this whole subject) that the mind or perceiving power is within the head—that all the sensible qualities and sensible objects of the Universe, great and small, being mental things and within the mind, are therefore within the skull. The theory

of these physiologists is that the objects of sense exist only *where* the general organ is, under the condition of which the sensible qualities and their groups, and the sensible positions and distances of these, are perceived: and as that organ is the brain, they conclude that it is on the nerves of the brain—inside the head, therefore—that all the sensible qualities and their groups or clusters exist, and that thus the whole sensible universe, with all its vast sensible distances and sizes, exists there also. This is so astounding a notion that the reader uninitiated in such subjects will naturally be inclined to suspect that it cannot be correctly imputed to men of science and sagacity, but they themselves admit that they hold this, and it follows necessarily from their first supposing that the mind is within the head, hidden somewhere in the sense-phenomenon which we call the ‘brain.’ Then they try to reconcile themselves to this awkward result of their theory about the mind being in the head by supposing that, although each person has thus within his skull only a microscopic universe in the three dimensions of space, or rather such portions of this universe in succession as are contained within the compass of the retina, there nevertheless exists, they think, outside this miniature universe, and outside the head containing it, another universe of other objects—a vast system of insensible points with insensible distances and insensible sizes, which, even if they had been sensible, we never should have any chance of perceiving, as the eye and other senses only perceive what is within the head, yet which we can, they think, reasonably infer from the cerebral or microscopic universe: nay, they regard it as quite clear from this sensible system of things that there undoubtedly is this insensible system likewise; but admit also that this system of unextended points is something entirely different from our universe of the senses and entirely inexplicable, both as to its nature and its purpose. They nevertheless speak of it as a universe of objects, and even as *the* universe.

Now Berkeley denies *in toto* that the sensible or material qualities or their groups exist within the skull. He holds that they are all outside it, at all the vast and various distances at which we see them from our bodies and from one another throughout the universe, our bodies and heads being groups of sensible qualities, just the same as all the other material objects around them: that the organs of sense, the brain, and the whole human body are conditions under which the sensible qualities and their groups, as well as the distances and sizes of these groups, are perceived; but the unphenomenal nature, or spirit nature, which perceives these sensible qualities is itself entirely exempt from such qualities, and being unextended cannot occupy space, nor have a place among things that can—is, therefore, itself in no part of the material universe, merely having its powers of perceiving limited to the place where its material organs are, and limited further by their position with reference to the object perceived; which very clear and single fact leads careless thinkers to the mistaken notion so current among physiologists that it is these organs themselves—these mere conditions of perception—that perceive, and that what these organs perceive is in the very spot where these organs are.

Another statement of the doctrine, to some extent connected with the last, can be made as follows, but with the evil of being in the vague and inaccurate language popular and current on the subject:—The common notion of the ignorant is that of so many physiologists just alluded to, about the spirit being something lodged within the skull. But Berkeley reminds you that spirit is exempt from space (size), as well as from every other sensible(material) quality; and that, this being so, it cannot occupy space, nor exist in it; that, on the contrary, all space and its contents exist in spirit, and cannot but so exist. In other words, while the common notion of the unscientific is, that the spirit is lodged within the head—literally within the area of the skull, our doctrine is, that the head is within the spirit.

This statement, on account of the language used, is less easy to understand, but, in reality, it is attended with no difficulty whatever for such persons as accept this language, and recognize that ideas can be said to be *within* the mind, and that the mind can be said to be *within* the head.

The head is within the room, the room within the house, the house within the sensible universe—within the universe that we see and feel. But all these sensible things are of the phenomenal nature. They are all of them phenomena, or sensible objects, which even our most violent opponents will now tell you are things within the spirit; within the spiritual nature; mental things, things which could not possibly exist independent of mind (or, as we often say, without it—outside it), any more than sorrow could, or than physical pain could. The group of sensible qualities, which we call the head, is therefore within the spirit—not the spirit within this head; the whole universe of sense thus within the spirit, not, as so commonly supposed, the spirit within this universe of sense.

I have stated thus far the facts as they are commonly stated on this point, even by those who seek to controvert us; and we see that, even upon their showing, the head is within the spirit, in the same sense as our ideas are in it—*i.e.*, in the only sense of the expression intelligible; for what is extended can no more exist literally in what is unextended, than a sound, for instance, can subsist in a colour, or shape in a mathematical point; and equally impossible is it that what is unextended, like spirit, should occupy space—*i.e.*, should become extended—should exist in space and among extended things. In what sense, then, it will be asked, do our opponents mean that the spirit exists within the head? and in what sense is it true that the head does not exist within the spirit?

The reader must here reflect a little.

Our opponents admit that, in all such cases, it is the sensible house and the sensible room, the sensible head and



the sensible universe that is commonly spoken of, and that it is quite true the spirit cannot in any sense exist within such things, although such things exist very well within the spirit, just as knowledge exists within the spirit, and as our poems and our histories so exist. But since it is thus within the spirit that the sensible universe exists, as our opponents admit; and since it is, according to them, within our heads that the spirit itself exists, it naturally follows that their word 'head' means something different from the sensible group of qualities so called; and so it is. They mean an insensible unextended thing called 'a head.' It is the more important to dwell upon this fact, because it is one which our adversaries are especially anxious to keep out of sight. They *suggest*, as already described above, that most probably all the sensible objects—groups and qualities—of the sensible universe, and the group called 'the head' among the rest, which are thus by their theory placed within the skull, *may have* corresponding things of some kind, although wholly unextended, that exist outside and beyond all the universe of sense-manifestations; and that although these supposed things (external to all mind and skull) do certainly not exist, and could not, in the spirit, it is yet *conceivable* that the spirit could exist in those of these unknown, unextended things, which correspond to the sensible groups called 'heads;' and this is really what these physiologists and philosophers say and mean when they speak of the spirit as being located within the head. They mean within this insensible, unextended, unknown supposed head, which is, they consider, entirely external to and beyond the sensible one, and entirely different from it, as well as beyond the limits of the whole sensible universe. This supposed head has, they admit, neither shape nor size—is, in fact, a mathematical point—yet may, they think, still be called 'a head,' and even *the* head; and it is not, they hold, impossible that the spirit should exist in this. The reader will now be able to understand what we mean when we say that the head subsists within the spirit, and what our scien-

tific opponents mean when they say that it is the spirit which exists within the head.

But there is here also, it is quite clear, on the part of our opponents a full recognition of the principle that we insist on, viz., that the sensible universe is wholly phenomenal—nay, it almost seems as if they were endeavouring, by the aid of their own doctrine, to render the *à priori* truth of ours the more manifest. Even if there were such unknown, external, unextended heads as those here supposed, and even if the other unextended thing called spirit had been so constituted as to have been able to exist in them, yet this could make no difference as to the phenomenal nature of things sensuous. Our analysis has reference to *our* universe—the universe we know of, our material and sensuous one—not with that which is, or rather is supposed to be, beyond the precincts of ours; and after the minutest scrutiny conducted under the superintendence of our opponents, we have only to re-assert the great fact of nature which it was left for Berkeley to discover, and for them thus to establish, viz., that our material universe is a Phenomenon; that whatever the extramundane, or extramental discovery referred to by these philosophers may ultimately turn out to be, the great fact remains untouched and unassailable—the material substance of our universe is wholly of a phenomenal nature.

A brief statement of our doctrine is that which represents it as teaching that the group of sensible qualities is itself the substratum or subject of its own qualities, each of them is part of it, and it is qualified by them; which is the true and obvious meaning of the terms quality and substratum (or subject). There is no other meaning for them that can even be imagined, as must now be pretty evident, even for the most sanguine, after all the efforts made and ingenuity expended in order to discover one. But our opponents, not recognizing this utter failure in their search, and not able, they tell us, to comprehend how completely, how literally, and how truly all the qualities together constitute the subject or substratum of each, and how entirely any other sort

of thing introduced among them would be devoid of these qualities, have been led to look for some other kind of thing or nature to act as substratum for them; and for a century and a-half their search has been most elaborate; but instead of at last acknowledging that they can find no other better or more reasonable than the object or group itself—in fact, no other of any kind whatever—they say that they are sure there must be some other, but that they know nothing about this other substratum, except that it certainly is not *with* its qualities—that it must be in one place and they in another—the qualities within the skull and the substratum or subject of these qualities outside it. It is obvious that these writers have been led into this absurdity by their theory of the mind (with the sensible qualities of things) being lodged within the head, and by the necessity they felt for supposing *some* portion of each object to be outside this head; also, no doubt, by their other strange conviction that phenomenal nature is essentially intermittent, and that they must suppose something permanent, however absurd, instead of it, during the intervals of intermission.

And this brings us to another summary of the doctrine, lying in the point of difference just alluded to as existing between us and our opponents. They hold that all sensible objects cease to exist every time we are not conscious of them,—that the light and the colours in the room are no longer there, as soon as we leave it,—that the weight and hardness of the table do not exist when we are only looking at it, and that our very faces do not exist when there is no one looking at us. This they think quite reasonable, because, according to them, a poem, or history, or any other phenomenon, as well as a sense-phenomenon ceases to exist whenever we are not conscious of it;—that our knowledge of things,—of geometry for instance,—ceases to exist while we are asleep; and one of their favourite modes of attacking Berkeley is by imputing to him this nonsensical conviction of their own. Far, however, from denying the permanence of phenomenal nature, our doctrine fully recog-

nizes this permanence, and insists upon it as one of the facts of nature that we are conscious of. We consider that the facts of English history and the Iliad of Homer exist permanently during all the intervals of unconsciousness, and that this is true of sense-phenomena or sensible objects, as well as of all other phenomena. Not only for its essence and the non-intermittent nature of this essence, but also for its continuous existence or relative presence in any given case, the object of sense is subject to the same laws of change or permanence as all other ideas or phenomena. We find by experience that phenomenal nature is never, with regard to material objects any more than with regard to our knowledge of such, dependent upon consciousness. In no case is this nature intermittent. No one, for instance, regards the facts of English history as intermittent, any more than the existence of Mont Blanc ; every one is conscious that they are not so ; and equally true is it that the group of sensible qualities which everybody calls Mont Blanc, is of a nature as completely non-intermittent as the history of England is.

This strange notion, that the feels and colours of things only exist while we are conscious of them, has, no doubt, contributed its share in making men search for a substratum which might be supposed to remain when, upon our leaving the room, all the sensible objects there cease to exist, and that, when there is no one looking at us, there might be something left where our face ought to be.

Another expression of our doctrine is that which describes the whole material universe as a universe of sense-perceptions presented to the spirit-nature as a means of inter-communication between spirit and spirit ;—precisely the same sense-perceptions being, with that object, presented under the same physical or sensible conditions in the case of each spirit,—so precisely the same that each can regard its own sense-perceptions as identical with those of other spirits similarly circumstanced. These sense-perceptions or sense-phenomena have space or size in the three dimensions,

with all the other sensible (material) qualities ; and the animal body which constitutes, in this state of things, the indispensable condition of each spirit's action, is itself, of course, a portion of the general universe,—one of the sense-perceptions of which the whole consists, and capable, within certain limits, of being moved freely about among the other objects or sense-perceptions, according to the will of the individual spirit to whose control it is subject.

Another statement of the doctrine results from an account of the convictions here equally held by ourselves and our more enlightened opponents, which, like one or two of the foregoing statements, will almost lead the reader to think that there is really no difference whatever of the least moment, between us and them.

All these more enlightened opponents admit that phenomenal nature and spirits are both products resulting from the action of a cause, which, as nothing whatever can produce itself, is necessarily something totally distinct from both. And this supreme cause they call the Absolute, just as we do. They admit also that all the things existing, that we know of,—all the products of this supreme cause known to us,—are of one of these two natures ;—they are either phenomena or they are spirits ; and they admit that the sense-phenomena are the only material objects at all *known* to us. With regard to the Absolute, they are able to see that it is not either of its own products ;—that it is therefore neither phenomenon nor spirit ; but, on the contrary, as different from both as either is from the other ; and for this very reason utterly unknown to us. They admit also in all the actions of the Absolute abundant indications of what we call Discernment, and Intention, and Choice. They therefore trace to an express intention, on the part of the Supreme Cause, all this resemblance to a spirit's action, and hold that the Supreme Cause acts thus with us, as a spirit with other spirits, in order that we should so think of it, and so, ourselves, act with regard to it ;—and this is what we hold also quite as much as these

opponents do. We, both of us, moreover, speak of the Absolute as a spirit, although we know it is not one, but a nature far superior to, and far beyond the spirit-nature in all conceivable respects.

Such is the Absolute or Supreme Cause, and such its two products; and so far we and the opponents I now speak of are entirely agreed. The only difference is this:—They think that the Absolute agent could not, in any manner intelligible to us, maintain two such natures as these in a permanent and steady existence according to the extensive network of laws, called ‘the laws of nature,’ without the aid and co-operation of some deputed agent. What we understand by Omniscience and Memory might, in such a work, they think, fail. They therefore propose that we should believe in a machinery wholly unknown to us, and with which we have not, and never could have anything whatever to do; by which, rather than by a mere *fiat*, the Absolute may, according at least to human ideas, maintain both a percipient and non-percipient nature in existence,—both the world of what we call spirits and the world of what we call matter, with their enormous amount of detail. Now this unknown machinery of mathematical points, being wholly devoid of all sensible qualities, and placed entirely outside the phenomenal Universe, or Universe of sense, is the only thing here, the existence of which we Berkeleians utterly deny. We even acknowledge ourselves astounded at the hypothesis emanating as it does from men of science and reflection. And they make a further step in the same direction. This unknown and unknowable machinery is what these opponents do not scruple to call ‘the material Universe’ and ‘matter,’ though they admit that it is in all respects a different kind of thing, and even well separated by its very nature (by the whole diameter of its being, as some have well expressed it) from the material universe and the material substance so familiar to all of us. We see however that there is here no difference between us and our opponents as to the great and sole fact in question, that our material universe is of the phenomenal nature.

Whether there be but one Absolute or twenty of them, or only two as here proposed, is quite a different question,—and one which may easily be left to settle itself.

I subjoin one other mode of stating the doctrine, extracted from my exposition of it in the *Monatshefte* of Berlin, and then I shall hope that the reader sees clearly the reasonableness of the single proposition placed before him in the following pages as an *à priori* principle.

The six principal points of our doctrine are the following:—

1. The Ego, being self-conscious, does not infer its own existence. It perceives itself, or experiences itself, without any intermediate sign or evidence of its being present; and this in every act of perception.

2. The phenomenon also, which it perceives, is perceived or experienced by the Ego, without any intermediate evidence or sign being necessary from which its presence might be inferred. Both it and the Ego therefore are immediate perceptions in nature,—not inferences or deductions. The phenomenon moreover is neither conscious of itself nor of anything else; whereas the Ego naturally infers the reality of its phenomena from the consciousness which it experiences of its own reality.

3. The Ego therefore knows the nature of only these two objects, thus immediately perceived, *i.e.*, not inferred,—the Ego-nature and the phenomenal nature. It is so ignorant of all other natures that it cannot even imagine what another nature could be like, any more than it could imagine what a sensation would be like that was different from any of those known. All that the Ego can infer respecting another nature is only that this other exists. For another nature could be like nothing known to the Ego, so that no description could convey it.

4. The Ego infers the existence of other Egos and of their phenomena from its self-experience and its own phenomena; and effects this solely through the principle of Causation,—a principle of which the Ego is conscious as being an *à priori* fact of its own nature.

5. Through the same principle of Causation, and precisely in the same way, the Ego infers also an Ego as the Originator of all—of the human Ego and of the phenomenal universe (the universe of sense-phenomena); but this superhuman Ego, as Ego, only in the sense of choosing and discerning and intending, not by any means as a mere human Ego or spirit, with greater powers.

6. As a thing cannot be its own cause, and no nature, therefore, can be its own product, the Ego infers that our Ego-nature is not the nature of the Supreme Cause. It infers further that when our Ego-nature is manifested by those actions of the Supreme but Unknown Cause which indicate choice and intention and discernment, it is so manifested not because this is the nature or these *the* characteristic powers of the Supreme Cause or Absolute, not because it has not a nature entirely different from and unimaginable to the human Ego, but solely in order that the higher nature may be in this way revealed and understood as far as the human nature renders this practicable; as it also renders it a desideratum; viz., in that form of choice, discernment, and intention with which the human Ego is familiar in its own case, as an Ego, and in the case of other Egos; and which its happiness requires it should find among whatever more comprehensive although unknown powers may belong to the Absolute,—the Originator of its existence.

I subjoin here, from the *Contemporary Review* for March, 1870, a list of the egregious blunderings that are to be met with in books upon this subject among the other nations of Europe as well as among ourselves. It will assist the reader to comprehend what he has to contend with in his study of the doctrine.

‘1. Berkeley does not deny, either wholly or in part, the existence and reality of the material world external to our bodies; nor does he deny its permanence and its substance.

‘2. His doctrine is not only a complete Realism, but shows clearly that that is precisely what the doctrine of his opponents is not.



'3. He nowhere says that material objects are mere imaginings of our own, or imaginings at all. He says the contrary everywhere.

'4. He nowhere denies the reality of the objective sensuous universe outside our bodies. That is the very universe of Matter and material and external objects whose existence his opponents deny and he defends.

'5. It is not true that he considers, or that any one considers, anything to be harder, or heavier, or more real, or more substantial, than a phenomenon can be: than a block of granite for instance, or a bar of iron.

'6. According to him such expressions as those often imputed to him, "mere phenomena," "only phenomena," are senseless expressions — as senseless as if we spoke of people as being "only" alive and happy, or as being "mere" rational creatures, or of some one as being "only" starved to death, or as being "purely and merely buried alive," or of sugar as being "merely" sweet, or of bread as being "merely" nutritious and good. According to him this is only the language of idiots. He never used it.

'7. He nowhere says that our sensuous perceptions are entirely unobjective. He says the contrary. He says everywhere that they are entirely objective.

'8. He does not say that when we experience or perceive external objects, such as colours, sounds, weights, &c., we are deceived. He says the contrary everywhere. He says that these are the real things.

'9. He nowhere says either that our sensations do not exist, or that they are not some of our most real things. It is his opponents who deny the reality, externality, objectivity, substantiality, &c., &c., of what we see and feel, or, as they express it, of what is "merely" ("purely," "only") seen and felt, and they hope by imputing this denial to him to avert the odium of it from themselves.

'10. It is not true to say that it is peculiar to his doctrine to hold that we do not see what we hear or feel, nor feel and hear what we see. No one thinks we can

hear the weight of a house, or feel a colour, or see a sound. Berkeley only drew attention to this fact.

'11. He nowhere says that we do not see the shape and size of things—of the chair before us, for instance. He everywhere insists upon it that we do—that we see and feel the qualities that inhere in our sensations *quite as well as* our sensations themselves.

'12. It is not true to say that it is peculiar to his doctrine to hold that the shape and size seen at one distance only enable us to *infer* what shape and size we should see at another distance. It is not correct to say that any one denies this.

'13. It is not true to say that it is peculiar to his doctrine to hold that we do not see, but only *infer*, the distance between objects in the line of sight. There is nobody who thinks that we *see* this distance. He only drew attention to the point as a fact in physics, already well known in his day.

'14. It is not true to say that it is peculiar to his doctrine to hold that we infer the visual shape and size from the tactual ones when we are blindfold, or those that are tactual from those that are visual, when we merely look at the wall or door. It is not true to say that any one now denies this, or ever denied it. Berkeley only drew attention to the fact.

'15. It is not peculiar to his doctrine to hold that we, in no sense of the words, go out of ourselves to perceive things—either out of our bodies or out of our minds. No one supposes we do so.

'16. He nowhere says that our sensations are affections of what perceives them, *i.e.*, of what we call "ourselves." They are, according to him, as distinct from the Ego as any one of them is from the other, or as any one thing can be distinct from another thing; the body itself, or organ of the body, being, according to him, only the condition under which the Ego or Spirit perceives them.

'17. He nowhere says that all Ideas are Sensations,

although he says that all Sensations are Ideas; neither, however, are affections of anything percipient.

'18. He does not deny either that one Sensation can be outside another, or that one Idea can be outside another.

'19. He nowhere says that the Spirit (or Ego) has any Inside or Outside connected with it. On the contrary, he denies that it has either. When, therefore, he speaks, in popular language, of things as *in* or *outside* the Mind, he does not ever mean *locally within* or *locally without*, but merely figuratively so. He means, strictly and scientifically speaking, *IN RELATION TO* the Spirit, or *NOT IN RELATION TO* it.

'20. He nowhere says that the animal body is, in any case, the percipient. He distinctly states the contrary. He is, therefore, as far from saying that it has sensations within it as that it has ideas of any kind within it.

'21. He does not say anywhere that material things, or other real things, like sound and pain, exist only in our imagination. He explains at great length that this is not so, and that this is not ever what is meant when such things are called phenomena. Everybody knows that a bad toothache is a phenomenon; yet nobody thinks that a bad toothache exists only in our own imagination. \*

'22. He nowhere says that the Spirit creates or imagines the real material objects which it perceives under the condition of the senses. No imputation could be more preposterous. .

'23. He nowhere says that the material Universe is not outside the animal body. On the contrary, he everywhere explains that it is. He merely says\*that it exists and has all its vast reality *IN RELATION TO* the Spirit, and through the fact of its being in this relation.

'24. It is not true to say that he denies the existence of Matter—of the Matter which we see and feel. He only denies the existence of occult or transcendental Matter—of the supposed Matter which no one under any circumstances, even if it were before our eyes or in our hands, could ever see or ever feel. This Kant knew well.

‘25. He nowhere says that phenomena do not exist. He says, on the contrary, that they do;—not only the material phenomena, such as hard things and heavy things, and things large and small, but also mere thought-phenomena, such as mere ideas of the sense-phenomena which we retain after our experience of the sense-phenomena themselves is over.

‘26. He nowhere says that a phenomenon is a part or a state of the Spirit. He says distinctly that it is neither one nor the other.

‘27. He nowhere says that only spirits exist. He everywhere asserts the contrary. He everywhere asserts that material things, *i.e.*, sense-phenomena, exist as well as Spirits; and that other phenomena exist also. It is only in Germany that there are writers who hold that a phenomenon can be a portion of a Spirit, or a Spirit a portion of a phenomenon.

‘28. He nowhere says that it is through its faculty of Imagination that the Spirit perceives the Material Universe.

‘29. It is not true that he was the first propounder of the doctrine in Metaphysics that the Universe was made and is maintained by God—by a Spirit or Ego—a personal, perceiving Spirit, with thoughts and volitions; nor that this metaphysical doctrine is, or ever was, peculiar to him.

‘30. It is not true that he is the first propounder of Moral Causation—of the doctrine that nothing can be strictly and unmetaphorically regarded as the Cause or Origin of anything whatever except of that which it intends doing. Nor is the doctrine now peculiar to him. All other “Causes,” as they are called, are occasions only and conditions; and are admitted to be so by all who profess to explain what they mean when they use that term.

‘31. It is not true that he is peculiar in holding that nothing can know what it is doing and intending to do, except a Spirit.

‘32. Nor is it a peculiar tenet of his that nothing but a

Spirit can have thoughts, and that therefore nothing can present its thoughts to one Spirit but another Spirit. There is hardly any one who would not be ashamed to dispute such things.

' 33. He nowhere says that the pain and other sense-phenomena which are produced in (in relation to) the human Ego, exist, as such, in, or in relation to, the Divine One. He says exactly and emphatically the contrary. He says that the Supreme Spirit knows all things, and knows of the bodily pain we suffer, but does not suffer it.

' 34. He nowhere says that the objects of our dreams or other mere subjective imaginings have any reality, nor that any interpretation of nature can give it to them. They are unreal objects—and he constantly says so.

' 35. He nowhere says that we must not express ourselves in the figurative language of Physical Causation. He frequently says the contrary, and frequently himself does so. He merely suggests that we should never allow ourselves to forget its figurative character.

' 36. Finally it is entirely inaccurate and most unjust to say that he professed to hold this phenomenal nature of matter *because* it exhibits the utter groundlessness of Materialism and Atheism. He distinctly says that this was not so. He distinctly explains that his sole ground for holding it was that it is founded in fact and reason; and that it is so, has (senseless as this may appear) been frequently admitted even by those who have refused to adopt it.'

It belongs perhaps also to this Introduction that I shall here mention the condition in which the subject stands in our literature at the present day; and the first thing which strikes one as remarkable is that although there is scarcely a book written on any thoughtful or scientific subject in which, upon some pretext or another, Berkeley's name is not introduced and always with the highest admiration of his mental powers, yet very seldom, except by a few adversaries of his doctrine, chiefly psychologists, is this doctrine itself, the only important subject on which he wrote, ever

alluded to, and by them only in such a vague way as to leave it very uncertain what they understand by it. That these writers mean however to find fault with it and its founder they never leave uncertain.

Except myself I find no English writer at present who undertakes to explain the grounds and reasons of this doctrine as well as the *à priori* character of them and it; nor does it appear, from the researches recently made by a writer of distinction, that there has ever been any one else who has actually written in explanation or defence of the proposition, since Berkeley's own time, notwithstanding the *very* favourable reception which among thoughtful men it is known to have met with from the very first. Let it not however be inferred from these circumstances, that the doctrine, as far as it is understood, is not now popular among our thinking public, nor that it is not accepted (as it really is most fully) by our leading scientific men. They all acknowledge that, as far as they understand it, they agree with it; and almost all of them understand it perfectly. It is even probable that this very favour with which the doctrine has been, from the first, received, has contributed, not a little, combined, of course, with the simplicity of the subject for any educated person, and the original, clear as well as popular expositions of the founder, to occasion this absence of exposition on the part of its adherents. There has really been very little need of any. The extremely few opponents now left who at all announce themselves, in number perhaps not exceeding six or eight,—the extremely few writers who, in opposition to us, declare themselves advocates of an intermittent existence in our chairs and tables, and insist that the millstone is not *merely* (as they say) a group or mass of material qualities,—that there must be something however incomprehensible in the millstone besides all that, even when broken up, can be felt in it or seen in it, present themselves before us with this suspicious peculiarity that they decline to justify their judgment before the public or even to specify with much exactness what that judgment

is. They will affect to do this sometimes in private or confidentially, if any one cares to listen to them on those terms, or they will affect to do it in one-sided statements and in books to any extent that people are inclined to pay for ; but a strict and close discussion before the critical public, in which *exactness would be insisted on*,—to that they do not consider either themselves or their convictions adequate ; that they decline ; for that they have, if we are to believe them, no time that they can spare from money-getting. Nor do we blame them for any part of this decision. All we ask them is to be just to scientific progress ; and to let it be known that they really do decline the discussion of their odd convictions ;—that they really do consider that neither their own doctrine nor their objections to ours would admit of being advantageously discussed before a critical public. That is all the distinct statement which we ask them to make.

It seems at first sight a strange fact that while the English opponents of the doctrine shun discussion our foreign opponents rather court it and always freely accord it when asked for. The explanation of this lies in the fact that the English opponents are more aware of what even to them must seem the 'probable' truth of the doctrine, than the foreigner is, not only from their having the subject oftener forced upon their attention, but also from their knowing that their party could not furnish a refutation satisfactory to themselves, even when a prize of £100 was offered for the first such presented ; nor subsequently when that prize was raised to £500 ;—quite enough, it will be admitted, to make them suspect their odd convictions, and to make them unwilling to expose these to the world. Then these opponents are committed to their opinions in a way and to an extent which renders it very difficult for poor human nature to renounce opinions. Whereas the foreigner has none of these difficulties to contend with. He is not at all aware to the same extent, of the impossibility of refuting our proposition, or of defend-

ing his own, Tenneman, the common authority on the Continent, having made him think that ours is nonsense; and he heard of course but little of the liberal prizes which our English opponents acknowledged their inability to gain. Then the foreigner is committed to no adverse conclusion, evidently devoting himself, in these discussions, only to seeking for the truth upon the question; and it is easy to see after some recent ones, that the only thing which still deceives him—the only thing which makes him hesitate to accept the doctrine openly and at once, is this lingering *semblance* of opposition in England, which he naturally professes himself unable to see the grounds of, and for which he as naturally supposes there must be some grounds. He will, however, it is to be hoped now soon get to see that, in point of fact, our English opponents have for a long time *acknowledged themselves* totally unable to justify their opposition; for we must remember that this is what it here means to refuse discussion. And with this knowledge will terminate all foreign opposition. Meantime, foreigners are seriously and patiently reconsidering the objections of our English adversaries, which had also for the most part hitherto been their own; and thus, unlike these English adversaries, they enter freely into discussion, hampered by no prejudices, as well as not being so much aware of the impossibilities they embark in when they accept discussion, as our English critics are; both which circumstances naturally render them more courageous.

The import of all this reserve upon the part of these English opponents is what the great bulk of the thoughtful public fully recognized in 1847-8, when the prize of £100 was specially offered to this (it must be admitted) rather bigoted party, for *any* imaginable refutation (of the doctrine) which they could agree upon *among themselves*; for, hazardous as it may seem to those who know the world, no other arbitration was proposed but that which they themselves should thus select; and the prize was left open to all of them for one year. It was known that many of them had



begun to write; but they were not able to send in a single paper; nor did any of them afterwards venture to reply to any argument ever advanced or to any explanation ever given.

The thoughtful public to whom in this matter we had on that occasion appealed, was not likely to be deceived by such conduct as this unwillingness or inability to answer; and the result was all that could be desired. If we did not then convert many from the ranks of our adversaries, all who have attended to the history of the doctrine know that from that event and hour the whole position of the question was changed; the old opposition was entirely paralysed; and no one except the few writers now on foot against us, ventured any more to speak or write unfavourably either of Berkeley or of what he taught; while even these few were obliged to have recourse to the obscurest language in order to carry on before the world, as they seemed to think necessary, the hostile judgment to which they had committed themselves. They of course continue to write, ignoring altogether the prizes offered, as they could not well help doing, and seeking to disparage our proposition in the usual vague way in which those write who are conscious that they do not understand the subject they are writing about even while they are expected to write about it; citing also each other to justify each other in their opposition to it, without taking the smallest account of adverse judgments; nay, drawing upon other countries of the earth for this sort of not very genuine corroboration; but never in any case (this has been their great care)—never in any case citing or combating the arguments advanced or explanations given in England or elsewhere in defence of our doctrine—a doctrine which, they seem to be fully conscious, only requires to be understood,—nay merely to be discussed, in order to have its complete reasonableness appreciated.

Such then is the state of our literature upon the subject. Our proposition, which entirely accords with the convictions of the uneducated, is fully recognized by those of the general

public who think upon such subjects, and by all scientific men who have studied it (quite as much as the Copernican theory is, or as the Circulation of the blood is), the only opposition being that of this small party, chiefly what are called Psychologists, perhaps about six or eight in number, —all very voluminous writers—(this seems to be their speciality) who have been long committed to this very unscientific and unphilosophical way of thinking; whose self-respect seems to have exacted this *continuance* of their opposition where it would not have exacted this opposition itself; and to have exacted this in spite of all its unreasonableness; —a party this in criticism, or, as they quaintly term it, in Philosophy, which does not seem to present itself in any other countries where opponents of our doctrine are still to be found; even the discussion of this proposition having been of late years carried on pretty vigorously upon the continent of Europe, with the utmost enlightenment and argumentative generosity upon the part of adversaries who had the courage of their convictions, and who rather asked for than refused the discussion of them.

I shall, I think, be pardoned for adding to this general statement of the controversy the little that I have individually been able to do in the way of explaining the doctrine to others during the last thirty years (almost all the literature connected with it that I know of in those years, except frequent editions either adverse or without commentary), augmenting this Introduction thus in a manner that I could not but regret, if it were not in the hope that it would conduce to the general object of it, which is that of freeing the subject and its literature from all that misconception and injustice which our adversaries have so assiduously endeavoured to heap upon it, in the eyes of those unacquainted with its import, —as well as that of rendering it easily intelligible to every educated person who desires to study it. And this augmentation, it may be hoped, will be the more easily excused when it is remembered that our opponents seek as much as possible to make it appear that the general interest takes

in the question is very limited,—much more limited than that taken in theirs, that there is no writer anywhere who holds or defends the doctrine, and that there is no commentator of Berkeley except themselves. In contradiction of these assertions, it can be shown that more has been done for Berkeley's doctrine than has ever been done for theirs both in point of general interest, and in point of commentary;—far more in both these respects by a single adherent of his proposition than has ever been done by all the adherents together of what they timidly call 'their doctrine.' Which of them has ever offered, or even tried to offer, the briefest explanation of their doctrine?—not one. Which of them, to prove its truth, ever offered a prize for the refutation of it?—not one. Which of them ever asked for a discussion of it?—not one. How childish then this pretension that their proposition is more before the world, and more interesting to the world than ours is!

I may mention that besides the prize of £100 offered in 1847-8, to our opponents, then a considerable party, for any refutation (of the doctrine) upon which they should themselves be able to agree within a year,—which refutation they declared themselves unable to produce; and a further prize of £500, offered in 1850, to one distinguished writer among them,—Mr. Jobert,<sup>1</sup>—on the sole condition that he should obtain the approbation of any three others of the party for such arguments as he might be able to adduce; in which effort, however, he also was entirely unsuccessful, as he himself candidly states in the pamphlet called *Pure Sounds*,<sup>2</sup> expressly drawn up upon that occasion by himself, and by him carefully deposited in the library of the British Museum;—besides these two prizes, I published at the same time as the first, a full explanation and defence of the doctrine, in octavo, *The Nature and Elements of the External World*,<sup>3</sup>—a work in which all objections were fully discussed,—and the

<sup>1</sup> A. C. G. Jobert, author of *The Philosophy of Geology, Ideas, &c.* Simpkin and Marshall, 1849.

<sup>2</sup> Simpkin and Marshall, 1850.    <sup>3</sup> Churchill, 1847-8, 2nd ed. 1862.

first work, as far as I can learn, that since Berkeley's own writings, has ever been written to point out the reasonableness and *à priori* character of his doctrine. I gave another thorough exposition of the whole subject in 1870, in an article in the *Contemporary Review* for the March of that year, with the title *Hegel and his Connection with British Thought*, also one about the same time in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, so ably edited at St. Louis, in America, by Mr. Harris, and among various other English publications earlier than these, one unassociated with the name of Berkeley, under the title of *The Thinking Substance in Man*, in our *Anthropological Review* for May 1865. I may also mention some discussions abroad;—one in the *Halle'sche Zeitschrift*, with my able and lamented friend, Professor Ueberweg, left unfinished at his death; another with Baron Reichlin-Meldegg at the same time, in the same journal; another soon after in the *Monatshefte*, of Berlin; and finally, one in *The Roman Review*, *La Filosofia delle Scuole Italiane*, with that highly distinguished Metaphysician and Statesman, the Count Mamiani, who has done so much for the philosophy of Italy and the philosophical literature of the world; in all which writings and discussions the reader will find the fullest explanations of every difficulty supposable in the doctrine; but not, I think, anything which he may not find, in other words, it is true, but probably stated clearer in the present edition of Berkeley's celebrated work.

The only correct account of our English doctrine that I know of, drawn up by a foreign writer, is that of Professor Kuno Fischer, now of Heidelberg, who has written the fullest and exactest expositions that the world possesses of all the great writers in metaphysics to Hegel's time, beginning with Descartes; and who, in his entirely new work on Bacon (1875), as well as his admirable exposition of Kant, has verified the remark of our Mackintosh, first cited in *The Nature and Elements of the External World*, and often quoted since upon this subject, that to a mind

really capable of metaphysical distinctions, the Berkeleian doctrine presents no difficulty, being, says Sir James, in every case, an infallible test of metaphysical sagacity ;—a remark which, while it does honour to the eminent Professor of Heidelberg, contains not improbably the whole secret of the opposition made by the few English Psychologists and other writers alluded to in this Introduction

**A TREATISE**  
**ON**  
**THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.**  
**IN THREE PARTS.**

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**PART I.**—Summary and Exposition of the Doctrine. In three Chapters (33 Sections).

**PART II.**—Replies to the Objections raised to the Doctrine by Christians, Theists, Men of Science, and others. In two Chapters (51 Sections).

**PART III.**—Definitions and Illustrations on various points connected with the Doctrine both in Physics and Metaphysics. In two Chapters (72 Sections).



**THE**  
**PRINCIPLES**  
**OF**  
**HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.**

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**PART I.**

**OF PHENOMENA AND PERCIPIENTS; OR, SPIRITS AND IDEAS:  
THEIR NATURE AND INTERRELATION.**





## CHAPTER I.

*(Summary of the whole Treatise.)*

(a) MATERIAL NATURE, SENSIBLE, *i.e.*, PHENOMENAL.

A MATERIAL SUBSTANCE,—WHAT.

1. It is evident to any one who takes a survey of the objects of human knowledge, that they are either *ideas* actually imprinted on the senses, or else such as are perceived by attending to the passions and operations of the mind; or lastly, ideas formed by help of memory and imagination, either compounding, dividing, or barely representing those originally perceived in the aforesaid ways. By sight, I have the ideas of light and colours, with their several degrees and variations. By touch, I perceive, for example, hard and soft, heat and cold, motion and resistance; and of all these more and less either as to quantity or degree. Smelling furnishes me with odours; the palate with tastes; and hearing conveys sounds to the mind in all their variety of tone and composition. And as several of these are observed to accompany each other, they come to be marked by one name, and so to be reputed as one thing. Thus, for example, a certain colour, taste, smell, figure, and consistence, having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name *apple*. Other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things; which, as they are pleasing or disagreeable, excite the passions of love, hatred, joy, grief, and so forth.

[‘Ideas actually imprinted on the senses;’ *i.e.*, sensible objects or their sensible qualities, whether in the absence of the organ of sense or on its application; for the only difference is that in the one case we

perceive them, in the other not.—‘The ideas of light and colours;’ i.e., the ideas *called* light and colours; as we may say the name of George, instead of the name George;—to the number of 50, instead of the number 50. So also lower down, ‘the passion of love,’ instead of the passion love;—an English mode of expressing the apposition of nouns. The ideas or phenomena called light and colours, sounds, &c., are sensations or ideas of sense.]

Here we have at once the whole doctrine of Human Knowledge in two brief sections—Berkeley’s own special proposition and doctrine being wholly contained in this first of these two sections.

The objects of Human Knowledge are, as he tells us in these two first sections, of two kinds only: minds and mental things, phenomena and percipients, or, as he commonly expresses it, ideas and spirits. No other elementary nature is known to man; no other, therefore, is for us even conceivable; just in the same way as we cannot even merely conceive what any other sensation would be like which was not one of the five kinds that we have already experienced.

He first states his own special doctrine, that our material substance is essentially a phenomenon, and to do this in a thorough manner he subdivides all phenomena into four distinct kinds, viz., (1) objects of sense, or sense-phenomena; (2) not only the instinctive and involuntary actions which take place in Percipient nature when it sees, feels, and hears, as well as when it remembers and imagines, but also the instinctive and involuntary actions which take place in it when it hopes or mourns, and which are called emotions; (3) the voluntary or uninstinctive actions of the Percipient itself when it compares, prefers, or strives, as well as when it looks, or touches, or listens; (4) our recollection of these three classes of objects, or, as we commonly express it, our ‘ideas’ of them, when our personal experience of them is no longer involved, and when we only require to have them as thoughts—that is, when we only speak of them and think of them. These mere ideas then represent them in our minds, and are therefore called representative ideas. The objects themselves—the *real* objects, as they are called (in contradistinction to our ‘mere ideas’ of them)—do not the less really exist, in that case, while or wherever the laws of nature require them; but the ideas—the mental descriptions or representative ideas—that we have of them constitute the whole of what, in such

a case, remains to be "perceived" by the individual spirit, whose organ of sense is absent. And here we must observe that each spirit has these ideas not only of what it has itself experienced, but also of what it supposes other spirits have experienced or may be experiencing—whether that be an object of sense or an involuntary movement of the spirit (*i.e.*, an emotion) or a voluntary movement of it (*i.e.*, an action). Nor is this all. We can have these representative ideas even of those ideas which are not ideas of sense nor emotions nor actions. We can have, for instance, an idea of a Poem or a History after having read it, although a Poem or a History consists itself wholly of representative ideas—of ideas which are not sense-ideas, nor emotions, nor actions, but only ideas of these.

The sense-phenomena, or ideas of sense, are of three kinds : (1) The sensations belonging to each of the five senses, such as colours, sounds, and feels, which, besides being sensations, become qualities of the groups with which they are combined. (2) The qualities of these sensations, *i.e.*, the qualities delineated and marked out by them, such as size (or space) and shape and motion. These qualities of sensations, although thus marked out by feels and colours, are, nevertheless, not themselves sensations—which fact has made them appear to some superficial people to have an existence independent of sense and mind. (3) The groups consisting of both these kinds of sense-phenomena. These groups of sensible qualities are what our senses give us, and are what we call bodies or material objects. They are qualified by the various sense-phenomena of which they consist, which qualities are thus *in* them and *part of* them—qualities, therefore, in the only true and literal sense—in fact, the only sense at all conceivable—in which anything can be a quality or in which anything can be the subject of a quality.

The material object, therefore, which we see and feel, and the material or sensible qualities of which it consists, are thus seen to be sense-phenomena. Berkeley, in the language of his day, calls them 'ideas,' because we are conscious of them, but 'sense-ideas,' because we only have them under condition of the senses. These sense-ideas, however, are not *ideas of anything*. If we still call them 'ideas,' we must remember

that they are *original* objects or realities in nature, not copies or imitations or representations of anything, as our *mere* ideas of things are. These mere ideas, which we can have of other things, and of these sensible objects or bodies among the rest, are also ideas indeed, because they also are things we can be conscious of; but they are very different ideas from the sense-idea, which is not the idea of anything, and even very different from that group of ideas which we call a Poem or a History, but of which also we can have an idea; the difference in the former case being that which there is between the millstone itself and our idea of a millstone—the one being a round and thick idea, six feet in diameter—a very hard and heavy idea, moreover—with a large hole in the centre; the other idea being nothing more than our recollection or pictured knowledge of this one. A piece of music and our recollection of it are very different things, although both ideas; also the rainbow seen yesterday and our idea of it to-day are things that can hardly be mistaken for one another, yet they are both of them ideas. We have in all such cases the idea of sense and the idea which is not an idea of sense, or, if you prefer that point of difference, the idea which is the idea of something and the idea which is not the idea of anything. How is it possible to imagine an enlightened man confounding two such different senses of the word ‘idea,’ if he employs that term at all to speak upon this subject? Very few people, it is true, have been found intellectually bewildered enough to do so, and to mistake the one signification of the word for the other; but there have been some, alas! even among our great English thinking men, who have done so, and it is for that reason only that I have enlarged so much upon so obvious a difference.

There are two other distinctions here which it is important to attend to. In Section 89 we are reminded that we cannot have an idea (or image) of the relation subsisting between two or more objects, and that it would be more accurate to speak of our knowledge in such a case as a notion or a knowledge, rather than as an idea (*i.e.*, image or picture), for this it is not; the elements of a relation, and consequently of our knowledge respecting it, being in no one object, but uncombined in several, and merely discerned by the mind as existing in this

scattered manner. There is really in such a case no image, picture, or idea of an object, but a knowledge only of some difference or similitude between two or more. This however is now mentioned only for the sake of precision in our language; for what we know of two ideas cannot be anything very different from an idea in its nature, nor at all different from it in its relation to the mind, although it is not exactly any one known idea.

Another distinction of still greater importance, and all the more important here because much neglected, is the distinction between the *essence* and the *existence* of a phenomenon. This will be found treated of in Sections 3, 22, 23, 24, and 49, and in the remarks upon these sections. This essence and existence are regarded by most writers, especially by our opponents, as one and the same thing. It is apt to be imagined, and by our opponents always is imagined, that because a phenomenon is a *perception*—because its *esse* is *percipi*—it cannot exist except while some one is conscious of it, and that sensible things can only be thought of as perceived when there is somebody sensibly conscious of them. The doctrine of Berkeley cannot be understood without the removal of this misapprehension. Our being conscious is not necessary for the permanent existence either of the spirit or of its phenomena. We have the most complete experience of this fact that we can have of anything. We are not ever sensibly conscious of the central interior portion of our planet, nor ever sensibly conscious of the other side of the moon; but who pretends that these portions of either planet do not exist as *percepta* and as sense-phenomena (i.e., as sensible objects), or that we are not conscious of their permanent existence as such? Who considers that two and two make four only while we are conscious of it? Phenomenal objects, I repeat, whether of mere sense or of mere thought, conform with the most unintermitting permanence to all the requirements of nature's laws, without the slightest need of consciousness to support them. There is never a moment at which they are not thoughts, whether we think of them or not, as every one can easily see and understand for himself in the case of a Poem or a History. This is always a group of thoughts, and always permanently existing, however little the amount of individual consciousness

bestowed upon it. I may add that this well-known permanence of phenomenal matter is one great advantage among many which this sort of matter possesses over the imaginary unphenomenal matter of our opponents which it is proposed to substitute for it. We can not only understand from constant experience this phenomenal sort of matter as continuing to exist, but also as beginning to exist; whereas even our opponents themselves admit that they can understand nothing whatever about theirs—not only not its permanence, but not its commencement—nay, not even its possibility. They admit that, even to them, this insensible unphenomenal matter of theirs is essentially and in all respects as incomprehensible in its existence as in its essence.

The only other remark here necessary on the nature of material things, is to remind the reader that the bodies of animals, and their skulls and brains are ideas of sense or sense-phenomena like the rest of the sensible Universe; that they are some of those groups of sensible qualities which are described by Berkeley, in his first section, as groups of ideas; that since one idea can neither perceive itself nor move itself, nor move nor perceive another idea (see Sec. 25), even a group of them cannot perceive or move either itself or anything else—that therefore we have no grounds even for suspecting that the invisible perceiving nature (the Percipient) is in any of these groups of sensible qualities, or could possibly be in them, being *equally* exempt from all of them; and finally we see from this intimate knowledge of their essential elements, that the movement of animal bodies among the other material bodies of nature does **not** result from any locomotive power lodged in such elements or in their groupings, but merely from the volitions of the Percipient, and the means of carrying out these volitions, which is accorded to it by the laws of material nature.

We so far have Berkeley's own grand proposition and doctrine that matter is a mental thing and the material universe a mental universe—that the physical substance of nature is essentially a phenomenon.

## (b.) PERCIPIENT NATURE, IMMATERIAL.

2. But besides all that endless variety of ideas or objects of knowledge, there is likewise something which knows or perceives them, and exercises divers operations, as willing, imagining, remembering about them. This perceiving, active being is what I call *Mind, Spirit, Soul, or Myself*. By which words I do not denote any one of my ideas, but a thing entirely distinct from them, *wherein they exist*, or, which is the same thing, whereby they are perceived; for the existence of an idea consists in being perceived.

[‘The existence of an idea consists in its being perceived;’ i.e. in its being a perceived thing, of a perceived nature;—in its having ideas in it, as a poem has for instance; or in its having sensations in it, even when we do not experience them, as the chair in the room where there is no one; but not, we see, necessarily in our having these objects before the mind,—not in our being immediately conscious of them.]

The first important fact resulting from this first Section of the Treatise, is that adverted to in the remark just made—the immateriality of the percipient nature. This is here pointed out by Berkeley in his second and subsequently in his twenty-fifth Section. It results from the undisputed and most obvious fact, that the nature known as an idea or phenomenon cannot perceive anything or of itself do anything; there is therefore something else in nature, which does this, and which is therefore unphenomenal or immaterial. This is the Percipient in nature, which in human nature we call Spirit. The existence of this Percipient has been, of course, always known; but not always, nor ever very well before Berkeley’s time, that it was unphenomenal or immaterial,—utterly devoid of all material qualities. None of the evidence previously offered upon this point presented anything of the *à priori* character of that which here results from the discovery of our great English metaphysician. Some writers have, it is true, at this point undertaken to explain that one idea can perceive another,—that a colour, for instance, can perceive a sound,—and that especially when there are two or three ideas together, they become endued with a capacity for perceiving one another! This theory is as yet but very



obscurely hinted at in writings; and need not therefore be further noticed here. I merely mention it in order that the truth of the contrary,—the truth of what is here indicated by Berkeley, respecting the immateriality of the spirit,—should be thereby rendered the more evident.

Thus, then, in these two first Sections, he points out that the objects of knowledge are of two kinds,—only two,—and these totally distinct and different from each other, viz., the percipient nature whose *esse* is *percipere*, and the phenomenal nature whose *esse* is *percipi*,—minds and mental things,—the spirit, on the one hand, which perceives itself as well as its own phenomena, but neither other spirits nor other phenomena, and, on the other hand, these phenomena or sensible objects themselves, often hard, large, and heavy things, which, to the great perplexity of non-metaphysicians, are, by metaphysicians, so commonly called ‘ideas,’ although some of them are millstones; and which ideas, we are all conscious, cannot ever perceive either themselves or anything else whatever.

The great peculiarity to be here noticed, and which, although equally existing in the theory of our opponents, has been carefully left untouched by them, except as an objection to our facts, is the utter isolation of the individual spirit in its original condition, and the singular, as well as singularly effective method by which that isolation is remedied in the laws of nature. Each Ego or Spirit, as has already been said, can only perceive itself and its own phenomena,—not, strictly speaking, either other spirits or the phenomena of other spirits. The phenomena, however, of each Spirit or Ego are, by the laws of nature, precisely similar to those of all other spirits under the same circumstances of time and place; so that each spirit is ultimately enabled, by self-experience and inference, to think of and to speak of its own phenomena as those experienced by other spirits,—not only as similar, but as identically and numerically the same; this too with such complete effect that no one now, without a considerable effort, can ever bring himself to think of the rainbow or the millstone as a *separate object* in the case of each individual spirit. Each spirit, moreover, finding among its other sense-phenomena other human bodies like the one which itself controls, is able from the sounds and movements of these bodies, to infer, with the com-

pietest certainty, through its self-experience, the existence and presence of other spirits besides itself.

We have on the one hand, then (Sec. 1), all things called phenomena, or ideas—things whose nature is such that those of any one spirit are in reality perceived by only that one spirit, and inferred by all the rest; a large class of which, however—viz., the ideas of sense or sense-phenomena—constitute Matter, or what we call the material substance of the universe. This class of phenomena, and this alone, it must never be forgotten, is the subject of Berkeley's doctrine—the doctrine on the Nature of Matter. On the other hand we have (Sec. 2) those insensible and unphenomenal (*i.e.*, immaterial) discriminating things or Beings whose nature it is both to be self-conscious and not to be perceived by anything else, being, by means of their phenomena, objects of *à priori* inference to one another, but objects of inference only.

# *.The Principles of*

## CHAPTER II.

### OF SENSIBLE OBJECTS AND OTHER PHENOMENA.

#### *Permanence of the Phenomenal Nature.*

3. That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist *without* the mind, is what *everybody will allow*. And (to me) it seems no less evident that the various sensations or ideas imprinted on the sense, however blended or combined together (that is, whatever objects they compose), cannot exist otherwise than *in* a mind perceiving them. I think an intuitive knowledge may be obtained of this, by any one that shall attend to *what is meant by the term exist*, when applied to sensible things. The table I write on, I say, exists, that is, I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it. There was an odour, that is, it was smelled; there was a sound, that is to say, it was heard; a colour or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch. This is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions. For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their *esse* is *percipi*, nor is it possible they should have any existence, out of the minds or thinking things which perceive them. .

[‘Without the mind,’ *i.e.* without the *aid* of mind; or, which is the same thing, external to, and outside, the mind; regarding the mind as a sort of box or sphere; and this figurative sense will be found to help much if we take care to remember that it is only a figurative sense.—‘Sensations’ are ideas of sense, or sense-phenomena. ‘Imprinted on the senses’ is an expression apt to deceive an inexperienced reader. It

only means presented to the mind under condition of the senses. 'In a mind perceiving them,' i.e. in a mind, as perceived things. A poem for instance, with the ideas composing it, and a chair, with its sensations, exist thus whether we perceive them or not. Things whose nature it is that they should never exist 'as perceived things,' are things which we never can know anything about, even if it can be shown that such things ever could exist. Even the other side of the moon is not one of these.]

We now enter upon a separate discussion of each of the two general divisions above indicated; and first of phenomena. The reader is here reminded, at once and in a few words, that the sense-phenomena (the objects of sense) are precisely in the same predicament, not of essence only, but also of existence and permanence, as all other phenomena are; they exist as mere sensations do, in and through the nature that is conscious, but not only when it is conscious of them; participating as well in the permanence of this nature as in its *reality*, or ability to subsist independent of consciousness, and subject to the laws of all mental things, as well as to the laws which especially apply to their class — viz., the laws of material nature.

Although most of our opponents recognize that the mass of ideas which we call our knowledge of things is permanent from one day to another, and Homer's *Iliad*—another mass of ideas—always permanent, and the History of England a permanent thing, whether we think of it or not; yet they all, without exception, think that the light and colours go out of the room with the last person who leaves it; that the colours of the room do not remain the same from one day to another, being freshly created every day; that there is no weight in the chairs when we only *see* them, and that even our faces cease to exist when there is no one looking at us. Can anything in the shape of science be more frivolous than this? Can anything be more contrary to common sense and to the natural facts of which we are conscious? (See Sec. 45.)

We find it as a fact, of which we are all conscious, that the sense-phenomena have a permanent existence in nature—an unintermittent duration under nature's laws—without its being necessary that we should *feel* these phenomena or *see* these phenomena in this unintermittent manner.

This obvious experience is denied by our opponents. They consider that it is the organs of sense that make the sensible

\* qualities of things, and that these sensible qualities and groups subsist only as long as the organs of sense are present.

Now, when the Berkeleian is asked to explain the fact of nature here adverted to, he replies that the circumstances are here the same as in the case of mere ideas. These also exist permanently through the periods in which we are not occupied about them—*i.e.*, through the periods in which the condition productive of consciousness is not present, whether that condition be a speaker or a book.

Asked next to account for this permanence of mere ideas,—of a poem for instance or of a novel,—during the unconsciousness of individuals, we answer that mental things do not leave the mind, *i.e.*, do not cease to be mental things,—while we are, or because we are, unconscious of them, and that they thus subsist under this unconsciousness without being in the slightest degree affected by it. This we experience as completely as we experience anything. The spirit itself has, as part of its nature, this unintermittent existence during its daily unconsciousness of itself; and mental things not unnaturally participate in this characteristic of the spirit,—its duration during unconsciousness. Hearing, or reading, or reflecting, are the occasions upon which, or the conditions under which the spirit perceives or becomes conscious of these *mere* ideas afresh; but no one except the most superficial can suppose that the condition or occasion is that which creates them. They are known to exist permanently as perceived things or mental things, whether we think of them or not; and we can become conscious of them as such, whenever the condition or occasion—the book for instance—is had recourse to.

When asked then how a sensation can continue to be a mental thing while the mind is unconscious of it, and exist in mind after the organ of sense has been removed, we answer, as before, that it does so in the same way and on the same principle of existence and permanence as the mere idea does, or as the poem does, which is but a group of mere ideas. We may be reduced to only thinking of the poem without reading it, *i.e.*, to merely having our own idea of it present to our minds; but the poem itself is not thereby rendered less existent,—does not on that account cease to be a poem,—although no longer immediately present to the mind; and it is

the same thing which occurs in the case of the sensible object, when we can only think of it, *i.e.*, only have our mere idea or recollection of it. It remains still a sensible object subject to the laws of nature, and until these laws destroy it, we can become conscious of it, *i.e.*, have it immediately present to the mind, by having recourse to nature's appointed condition under which that result is obtained. We also answer to the above question that sensations, the weights and colours of the chairs for instance, of whose permanent existence, when there is no one in the room, we are all as conscious as we are of any other thing whatever, being mental things, can only exist as such, but so exist, we see, whether those other mental things, our bodies, co-exist with them in the same room or not. The mind is not in the room nor in the body, but the room and the body in the mind; so that the sensations in question can be in the room quite as well when our bodies are out of the room, as when our bodies are in it. We answer further to this question that a sensation (a weight or a colour) is not produced by the organ of sense nor in the organ of sense,—the condition under which it exists,—any more than the poem is by the book or in the book in which we read it; that both the sensation and the poem remain quite permanently and really and independently subsisting in the mind without reference to either of these other mental things which constitute their conditions;—that the organ and the book are only occasions or conditions,—the conditions under which we are rendered conscious of what perfectly exists otherwise and entirely independently of them; that a sensation is a thing which, except as a mental thing, could not exist at all, but which, as a mental thing, takes its nature from that of mind, as in this adaptation to unconsciousness as well as consciousness; and that what is true of a sensation, such as a feel or a colour, is true also of the qualities delineated by such things, such as shape and size, and of the group of all these sensible qualities, *viz.*, the object of sense. Neither the object of sense nor the mere idea of it depends for its duration and existence upon the condition or occasion which makes us conscious of it, but only upon the laws of nature to which such things are subject, and which they continue to undergo even when we are unconscious of them. The whole sensible universe is thus a mental thing,—a sense-phenomenon, or as

the expression is, a thing in the mind; and the fact of nature and experience is that, under the condition of the organs of sense, the spirit becomes conscious of what already existed in the spirit as part of this sensible universe, without the spirit being previously conscious of that part, just as, under condition of a book, the spirit becomes conscious of several ideas—a Poem or a History—which had existed even in the same mind as mental things perhaps for years, without its being once conscious of them all that time. In other words, a sensible quality or group of such (the sensible object) remains itself and unchanged, while we are unconscious of it, as permanently and completely as the mere idea of one does; and merely requires the condition appointed by nature's law (precisely as the mere idea or recollection of it does) in order that the spirit should find it always in its place among the other mental things or sense-phenomena of the Universe, subject only to the changes imposed upon it by the laws of physical (*i.e.*, sensible) nature.

We thus see what it is to be a mental thing, and what it is to be conscious of a mental thing, also what it is to be unconscious of one; and that mental things are as permanently existent as consists with the physical laws to which they are subject; and that there are, among others, two kinds of mental things, sense-phenomena and our ideas (knowledge or recollection) of these; and that neither of these depend for their permanence and existence upon our being conscious of them, nor upon the condition (book or organ) under which we become conscious of them. Finally we see that sensations are not things of which we cannot be unconscious,—not things that depend on consciousness for their existence and their essence—not things in short that are made by our being conscious of them, not things that are merely the mental things of the conscious mind. We see that nature's fact is quite different. All the things we know of subsist independently of consciousness; and surely it is worth while to have clear ideas upon such a subject.

The error here of our scientific opponents is twofold: *first* they err, and most egregiously, when they think that objects of sense (sense-phenomena) cannot have that permanent existence which we are conscious that they have;—when they

think, for instance, that our faces cease to exist if there is no spectator, and that our watches cease ticking when we put them in our pocket;—and *secondly* they err, to an extent, if possible, more inexcusable in scientific men, when they imagine, as they all do, that the insensible substitute which they propose for our faces and for the ticking of our watches, nay, even for the whole watch itself during the interval in which our consciousness is absent, can afford the least satisfaction to the proprietors, or the least solution of the difficulty which these writers have so ingeniously invented. Even if it were true, as they seem conscientiously to believe, and as, with their misapprehension of what is before them, they cannot well help believing, that the alleged non-permanence of phenomenal objects were a fact in nature, this substitution of unknown things for known things during the intervals of our unconsciousness,—this substitution of a nature which is essentially insensible for a nature which is essentially sensible,—in short, of one thing for another quite different,—could afford no explanation whatever of the difficulty,—no filling up of the chasm,—so supposed to have presented itself. To propose the unknown substitute here proposed by our adversaries is only another way of saying that they do not at all see how to liberate themselves from the nonsense of their own hypothesis respecting an intermittent existence for phenomenal objects, while we are all conscious of an unintermittent one,—and if their language were a little more candid, this avowal on their part would be sufficient. But the persistent attempt on the part of some to prop up their hypothesis by seeking to convince people that a Poem or a History ceases to exist when we are unconscious of it, is in the last degree frivolous as well as groundless,—nay, most unjust to those uninitiated readers whom they profess to instruct.

*Sensible objects OUTSIDE Mind, and thoughts OUTSIDE Mind. What does this mean?*

4. It is indeed an opinion *strangely* prevailing amongst men, that houses, mountains, rivers, and in a word all sensible objects, have an existence natural or real, distinct



from their being perceived by the understanding. But w  
how great an assurance and acquiescence soever this principle may be entertained in the world; yet whoever shall find in his heart to call it in question, may, if I mistake not, perceive it to involve a manifest contradiction. For what are the forementioned objects but the things we *perceive* by sense, and what do we perceive *besides our own ideas or sensations*; and is it not plainly repugnant that any one of these or any combination of them should exist unperceived?

[‘Among men,’ *i.e.* among scientific men. The unscientific were unacquainted with the subject in dispute.—‘Distinct from their being perceived,’ *i.e.* from their being *of a nature* to be perceived when the senses are employed for that purpose.—‘Should exist unperceived;’ *i.e.* should exist except as a *perceived and sensible thing*, whether we perceive it or not.]

‘ In this section Berkeley speaks of it as strange that scientific men should suppose that a sense-phenomenon or object of sense could exist apart from its mental nature, or, which is here the same thing, apart from the understanding. Such things, he justly says, never can exist nor even be thought of as existing, except as perceived or mental things; and as such they always can subsist, although we cannot always be conscious of them.

What Berkeley here states upon this point will not now be controverted; because no one thinks that an idea or phenomenon has an existence distinct from the understanding (although it can have, and, as we experience, generally has, a clear existence distinct from consciousness), and nowadays all our scientific men know that when we speak of an object of sense, or group of sensible qualities, we mean the mental thing so called; whereas in Berkeley’s time the expression ‘object of sense’ was for the most part employed, singularly enough, to mean something insensible,—something which either produced, as they thought, the object of sense (the object which we see and feel) or was the substratum of it. Our ancestors of those days, when they spoke of an object of sense or sensible object, did not know that the expression signified a mental thing at all, or what in metaphysics we understand by the term ‘phenomenon’ or ‘idea;’ and though perhaps it was strange that scientific men should have been so ignorant, yet

there was in this ignorance some excuse for their theory respecting the 'absolute existence' of these mental things.

But the question has passed from that stage, and now is: Why are scientific men obliged to suppose a duplicate for every object,—an insensible duplicate of every sensible object? Why should not the sensible object alone be sufficient? What is the use of the other? What is the origin of the strange hypothesis? Is the insensible object required as an originator for the object of sense which we see and feel? or is it required as its substratum? This hypothesis of an insensible second object in every case,—in fact of a whole insensible universe,—'strangely prevailing' among our scientific men, is all that Berkeley would now have to quarrel with, as he does indeed pretty roundly in Sec. 56; also in the Secs. from 67 to 81.

There are then more reasons why these writers have had recourse to this doubling of objects than Berkeley has thought it necessary to mention anywhere; and these, it seems to me desirable, should be fully understood at the outset of this discussion; which must be my excuse for adverting to them here, where Berkeley only speaks of the less explicit opinion prevailing among the scientific of his time, that the objects of sense when apart from consciousness are apart from mind.

One of these reasons is the error discussed above in connexion with Sec. 3, respecting the alleged want of permanence in phenomenal nature. This error necessarily led to the fiction of something, however different from the felt and seen, and however incomprehensible and unknown, which should supply the place of the felt and seen, during those intervals in which, there being no one conscious of the sensible objects, it was supposed that they and all their sensible qualities were obliterated and entirely withdrawn from existence.

Other excuses for this hypothesis of insensible objects are to be found in two old misconceptions of the scientific world, still, it is to be feared, 'strangely prevailing' among our physiologists, which must have added formerly, as, no doubt, they still do, to the difficulty experienced by some in understanding this subject. The first of these two misconceptions is the notion, considered highly scientific, that the mind is within the skull; and this merely because its organ (or physical condition)

—its so-called local action—is there. The effect of this first misconception on their part has been to make these physiologists suppose that *all* scientific men think with them, that the mind is within the skull, although this is really the opinion of only a few physiologists; and to make them therefore suppose that when we say the sensible Universe is within the mind, we mean, as they do, that it is also within the skull,—a supposition which naturally tends to confirm them in their blunder about the mind being there. On this point it is only necessary to say that no metaphysician considers the mind to be something in the head, but, on the contrary, the head and the whole sensible Universe to be something in the mind. The percipient nature, being wholly exempt from space (Sec. 2), cannot occupy space, and is not, therefore, inside space, but outside it and independent of it; in fact, contains space within it, although its organ, which is the condition of its action, is necessarily placed in space, and placed even within the skull. The second of the two misconceptions I speak of, is the notion, also considered as profoundly scientific, that all the sensible qualities, and the groups they form, are things *located* where the mind or percipient nature is itself placed, or at all events, where it acts; and therefore within the skulls of animals; it being considered by these philosophers a thing contrary to all reason, experience, and common sense, that a sensation,—a noise for instance, or a colour,—should be at a distance of yards or miles from the organ of sense, the physical condition under which it is perceived,—or exist anywhere except within that group of sensible qualities itself which is the organ of the mind, and which is lodged within the skull. The effect of this second misconception (*viz.*, that sensations and their qualities cannot be separated by an atom of space from this organ of sense or mind), has been naturally to lead these physiologists to suppose that the whole sensible Universe and all its sensible objects, with all their great and manifold distances, not only from one another, but also from the little group of sensible qualities which we call the head, are all located within this little group itself, which, moreover,—inexplicable as this may be,—is one of them,—all compactly lodged, in microscopic form, within the little group of sensible qualities so called, seeming nevertheless, to

our proportionably microscopic eyes, as large and endless as this sensible Universe now does. This is their first step. They then seek to justify this nonsense by saying that, no doubt, there is something outside our skulls as well as within them,—something *somehow* like the things that are inside them,—something, indeed, they admit about which we know nothing at all,—not even how such a thing is possible, nor how it could be like anything that we know.

The statement I have here had to make of what our opponents give us as a sound and scientific interpretation of nature, is so incredible, that the reader will be apt to think he misunderstands what is meant. But this is not the case; and the matter of it, however frivolous in itself, requires to be strongly pressed upon the attention of all who wish to understand thoroughly the subject of this Treatise. For this reason also I have mentioned it in the Introduction (pp xxvi. and xxix.).

When once these theorists had determined upon the reduction of all that we see and feel to this cerebral or microscopic scale, it became indispensable to them to make another step, which also they have done, in deciding that the microscopic Universe could not be the real one (the external one it evidently was not), and that the *real* Universe and its *real* objects must lie beyond all known space, *i.e.*, beyond all the space discerned by us in the sensible Universe, and be itself an insensible Universe outside the sensible one. We can thus see, then, here at once, how every object in the Universe had to be doubled, and how entirely insensible, as well as unknown and incomprehensible, the hypothetical ones had to be, since they were to be not only insensible, but also of a totally different nature from any we had ever before met with or heard of, being entirely devoid of all material qualities; it being even admitted, by the propounders of this theory, that our faculties would never enable us to know anything whatever about this duplicate Universe. Yet such are what our opponents call the real and permanent objects of nature (the sensible objects not being, according to them, real things at all). These are the objects which, they say, can exist apart from the understanding; and upon the subject of Berkeley's fourth Section, such is the opinion now strangely prevailing in some of our scientific circles at the end of the nineteenth century.

*Origin of the Error.*

5. If we thoroughly examine this tenet, it will, perhaps, be found at bottom to depend on the doctrine of *abstract ideas*. For can there be a nicer strain of abstraction than to distinguish the existence of sensible objects from their being perceived, so as to conceive them existing unperceived? Light and colours, heat and cold, extension and figures, in a word the things we see and feel, what are they but so many sensations, notions, ideas, or impressions on the sense; and is it possible to separate, even in thought, any of these from perception? For my part I might as easily divide a thing from itself. I may indeed divide in my thoughts or conceive apart from each other those things which, perhaps, I never perceived by sense so divided. Thus I imagine the trunk of a human body without the limbs, or conceive the smell of a rose without thinking on the rose itself. So far I will not deny I can abstract, if that may properly be called *abstraction*, which extends only to the conceiving separately such objects as it is possible may really exist or be actually perceived asunder. But my conceiving or imagining power does not extend beyond the possibility of real existence or perception. Hence as it is impossible for me to see or feel any thing without an actual sensation of that thing, so is it impossible for me to conceive in my thoughts any sensible thing or object distinct from the sensation or perception of it.

[‘To conceive in my thoughts;’ i.e. except as it exists to the conscious mind;—except with sensations and their qualities in the object, as constituting it.]

Berkeley here attributes the blunder of so many scientific men in his time respecting the objects of sense when we are not conscious of them, to the supposition then prevalent that there were in nature things represented by what we call ‘abstract ideas;’ and there is no doubt that this supposition had a large share in the blunder, since the ‘abstract idea,’ as often understood, implies that there can be objects without

any of the qualities of objects. His Essay on this subject is here given in the Appendix, and had been written by him as an Introduction to this Treatise. It is, however, very clear that this blunder at the present time is little connected with abstract ideas, but originates mainly among us, in the two other mistaken notions above mentioned, that the percipient is something located within a group of sense-phenomena (as if in an idea, or sense-phenomenon, or group of such, there could possibly be a perceiving power; see Secs. 2 and 25), and that the things perceived at a great distance from the brain subsist really in or upon the brain, and inside the skull, rendering it necessary, therefore, on account of these distances and sizes, to suppose other things external to the skull in a more spacious area than that afforded by the skull, and to call these supposed things outside the skull by the same names as those within it, in order to aid the illusion and prop up the hypothesis.

### *Difference between Essence and Existence.*

6. Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, to wit, that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind, that their *being* (*esse*) is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other *created spirit*, they must either have no existence at all, or *else subsist in the mind of some eternal spirit*: it being perfectly unintelligible and involving all the absurdity of abstraction, to attribute to any single part of them an existence independent of a spirit. To be convinced of which, the reader need only reflect and try to separate in his own thoughts the being of a sensible thing from its being perceived.

[‘Without a mind;’ i.e. except as things with sensations in them as part of them, and the qualities of sensations in them as part of them.

‘From its being perceived;’ *i.e.* from its having sensations in it as its qualities,—whether we happen to be conscious of it or not. How otherwise could it exist?]

When we say that a thing exists, whether it be a phenomenon or a percipient, we mean that it occupies a fixed relation to the facts and laws of nature, in which relation it conforms unintermittingly to those facts and to those laws, this permanence resulting therefore of course from these facts and these laws, and entirely depending on its conformity to them. This is the general principle of existence in the case of each of the two Essences into which we find all the objects of human knowledge divided.

When, therefore, we say that a phenomenon exists, and exists permanently—a history, for instance, or a poem, or a colour, a hard feel or a soft feel, a weight or a piece of music—we mean of course that these have or can have a ‘permanent existence,’ precisely as if they had an ‘absolute existence’ irrespective of percipient nature; as if they had an existence as entirely irrespective of percipient nature as it is entirely irrespective of our being conscious of them.

All that we seek to do, in our explanations upon this point, is, *first*, to recognize fully this permanence of all such things,—nay, to assert that we consider ourselves as conscious of this manifest permanence as we are of anything else whatever, although our opponents, in the most unqualified manner, deny that there is any such unintermitted existence of what we see and feel; and, *secondly*, to point out to the student that the absolute existence which we find in the phenomena of nature is not an existence independent of nature,—not independent, therefore, of percipient nature,—but only independent of the individual percipient,—*i.e.*, independent of our being conscious of them. Our task here, therefore, is to explain that what we mean by the unintermittent or permanent existence of a Sense-phenomenon, is that, even when we are not conscious of such an object, it retains all its sensible qualities in actual existence as we see them and feel them when we are conscious of them. Its weight, its colour, its size, its shape, its hardness, all belong to the object, not to us, and remain with the object when we are not there. The notion that our organs of sense create them is frivolous, nor much better the notion that they are destroyed by the removal of the organs. The organs\*

are only the conditions, under which the individual mind perceives what already exists permanently as a mental thing in nature, and of which, when we no longer perceive it, we can still think as an object of sense permanently existing.

It seems to be imagined by some physiologists and other writers that a sensation is something produced in us—something ‘subjective,’ as they express it: whereas it is a thing which exists before and after we are conscious of it, often miles distant from our bodies, and of which we are merely made temporarily conscious; not being at all, as these fancy it to be, a *state* either of our body or of our mind. This is true, moreover, of all the qualities of sensations, as well as of sensations themselves. We become conscious of them, but we do not create them by our presence, nor are they created by the organ which is the condition under which we are conscious of them, nor at all at the time that we become conscious of them, nor do they exist within our bodies. We merely perceive these sensible qualities and their groups, as we perceive other ideas; for ideas they are. Even when these ideas are very hard, and big, and round, and heavy, they remain still ideas, and exist as ideas exist. We can perceive nothing whatever unthinking, but ideas, whether these ideas be of sense or not of sense. The object of sense, then, or material object, is a permanent idea or phenomenon, or group of such, undergoing without intermission the various laws of nature to which the qualities of which it consists are subject,—undergoing, therefore, the various changes in relation to other things which, according to those laws, the changes of other things entail, precisely in the same way as if it had an existence not only independent of individuals, as it has, but also independent of its own nature and essence, which of course it has not. Our watches when we are asleep, and our faces when no one is conscious of them, as well as the light and colours of the room we leave, furnish clear illustrations of the familiar fact here adverted to, and of the curious denial so boldly advanced by our adversaries on this point.

We must attend carefully to the very wide difference that there is between the *Essence* and the *Existence* of such things. The one denotes the *nature* of the thing; the other not. The *Essence* here involves only a relation to percipient nature,—the



relation so often spoken of by Berkeley as being one '*within mind*,'—one not by any possibility EXTERNAL TO mind and yielding what he terms 'EXTERNAL THINGS;' for what would a pain or a poem mean, or any sensation or any mere idea mean, without percipient nature, or, to use that expression, 'external' to this nature? How could they even have their essence, to say nothing of their existence? Could there, even for one instant, be such things at all external to percipient nature? An EXTERNAL POEM, for instance?—what sort would it be? Whereas Existence involves only the presence of this Essence among other similar Essences, it involves only that conformity of one phenomenon to other phenomena (to their absence as well as to their presence) which is required by the laws of nature, and from which it results that, according to these laws, each phenomenon is *always* in its place among the other phenomenal facts of nature. Such, for instance, as the existence of the Iliad when it is in no one's thoughts; our knowledge while we sleep, the weight of the chair which no one touches, and the colours of the room when we are no longer there.

We thus see that the Essence of a thing is merely its nature (its constituent parts, as it were) and that its Existence is, in each case, merely the localized condition of this essence or nature among the permanent facts of the universe, without reference to what its essence or nature may be,—the combination, that is, of the mental essence in question and its laws with the other similar essences in relation to which it stands—a state of things which neither requires nor admits of any intermission. Thus we see at once that a thing's being a *perceptum*—something that could not exist without the aid of mind—does not imply that it exists; but merely that since there is a percipient nature, the *perceptum* or perceived nature can be constituted, *i.e.*, can exist, and as far as mere Essence therefore or Nature is concerned, can continue unintermittingly to do so. When it exists we can perceive it under the prescribed condition of an organ of sense: but this adds nothing to its existence. Pain or a Poem is a *perceptum* in this sense, even when it does not exist; but it must not be forgotten that in this meaning a *perceptum* may exist and yet not be perceived. We easily see all this in the case of the Poem. Its *esse* (essence or nature) is always *percipi*. It has no other nature.

It must therefore exist as a *perceptum* or not at all. But not necessarily a perceived *perceptum*, not a *perceptum* of which we are conscious. Its being thus a *perceptum* by nature and in its essence does not, I repeat, make it exist, and when it exists does not necessarily make us perceive it. The same is true of colour and of the other sensations as well as of the qualities of these (such as shape and size) and of the objects they constitute, and of the whole sensible or material universe which consists of these objects. It is not because this nature of sense belongs to the Universe that it exists, nor because it is by nature a perceived Universe or mental thing. It exists on other grounds. It exists, for instance, because it is produced. But such as it is it could not exist without its nature, which is that of belonging to mind. It does not exist, I repeat, merely because when it exists it exists as perceived, but when it does exist this is its essence. It can only exist as the mental or perceived thing which Berkeley defines it to be, nay even as the thing of which we are conscious when we perceive it; but it does not require for its existence that any one should be conscious of it. The Universe then exists in this manner as a mental thing just as a Poem or a History, as real as the millstone, but like the millstone wholly dependent for its essence upon its *sensible* qualities, and therefore upon percipient nature, not, I repeat, for its existence, which depends solely upon the laws of nature, but for its essence; its existence and that of each object in it depending, not as some frivolously imagine, upon our being conscious of it but upon the requirements and laws of physical nature only. Under these laws the sense-phenomena known as our faces, for instance, remain permanently coloured and delineated, even when there is no one looking at them, and our books exist in the library with all their letterpress, irrespective of where our senses happen to be; just as the *Iliad* exists whether we are thinking of it or not; as Beethoven's sonatas exist whether we are listening to them or not; and as their feel remains in the chairs when we are only looking at them. Berkeley's only question here is, how could a mental thing exist if there were no mind?

In explaining, under Sec. 3 (p. 15, &c.) how it is that sensible objects exist permanently during the intervals of unconsciousness, I observed that our 'mere ideas' (as they are called)—

our knowledge of these objects for instance,—so exist, and that this latter fact abundantly explains the former. But many of our opponents deny that even our knowledge of sensible objects exists permanently, just as all of them deny that the sensible objects themselves do so. For those who deny this permanence in all cases, it is unnecessary to suggest any explanation of how it is brought about in any. But for those who recognize the permanence of each mind's own knowledge and own ideas, even while the mind is not occupied about these things, yet here ask, merely as matter of science, *how* this happens, since this knowledge and these ideas cannot, they think, be then said to be dependent upon mind, and ought therefore, as mental things, to be lost *in toto* during the interval, having thus that intermittent existence which they do not seem to have, nay, which we are conscious that they have not;—for such persons Berkeley's remark in this section has a very important application: If you cannot see, in the nature of the mind itself and in what has been said, a sufficient explanation of your difficulty respecting mere ideas, you will find it a little farther on in your reflections if you carefully follow them. That there is this permanence of mere ideas is, you say, undoubted for you as well as for the rest of the world; but the explanation, derived from their relation to the human spirit, does not, you also say, seem to you sufficient to account for this permanence thus carried on notwithstanding, and as it were, in spite of, the incessant unconsciousness of the human spirit. Here then you have no alternative. You naturally recognize the necessity of a spirit-nature for the maintenance and permanence of such things as ideas or such a thing as knowledge; and you recognize, in final analysis, the insufficiency of the human spirit for that purpose. You thus arrive at, then, what we call *a priori* evidence of a Superhuman Spirit. These ideas—we are here only speaking of 'mere ideas'—cannot have this existence of theirs except through a spirit perpetually conscious,—perpetually omniscient; and you thus discern the necessary presence of such a spirit.

Ideas can only be presented by one spirit to another. Neither can a stone give them to a spirit nor a spirit give them to a stone. Ideas then exist *for* or *through* or *in* spirit in two ways: either as its products or as its phenomena. In

neither case is there any literal 'inside' or 'outside' in question, when we say they are 'in mind.' We only mean that they are mental things; and this they are in these two ways,—either as products or phenomena of some spirit; the spirit being either Cause or Percipient, or both;—the cause however being necessarily also Percipient or Knower, although the Percipient or Knower is not necessarily the Cause. It is the Cause that, in nature, determines the permanence and the laws of every object. The phenomena then, or ideas, exist for the Superhuman spirit, or this spirit could not present them to the human one; but when thus furnished to the human spirit, they then exist for it as well as for the higher spirit. Is it not clear then that as long as the Supreme Cause is in action and is conscious, the mental things called 'mere ideas' exist permanently whether we are conscious of them or not, and that they could not have this permanent existence which we are all conscious that they have, without this permanent action respecting them of a Mind with Superhuman (*i.e.*, with limitless) powers. To any of our opponents who have not previously made this reflection, it cannot fail to furnish, quite independently of Berkeley's doctrine, an unexpected and rather startling demonstration of spirit-action on the part of the Absolute.

But this is not all; nor is this precisely Berkeley's statement in this section. He is speaking only of sensible objects or sense-ideas,—not of the ideas or knowledge which we have of these; but as both are ideas, precisely the same argument applies to both. We infer spirit-action or (if our opponents prefer the expression) Personal Action from its effects. This is the only means we have of knowing each other's existence as Spirits or Persons. In this way also we infer the existence of the Supreme Cause or Absolute as, in its relations with us, a Spirit or Person, and find all the action, in nature, so arranged as to establish, for our understandings, this relation and no other between us and the Agent of this Action. (See *Introd.* xxxix.) In this respect, and so far, Berkeley's doctrine adds nothing to the ordinary evidence respecting the spirit-action of the Absolute. What, upon this point there is original in the doctrine, begins here. It is as follows: All the contrivance, design, and beauty of structure, which no one will call 'an effect *sui generis*,' and which, even to the savage as well

as to the man of education, indicate the presence of a Super-human Spirit, there is also to be taken account of, the MATERIAL, the STUFF, worked up into these results,—a sort of unintelligible element before Berkeley's time,—a *caput mortuum* in the crucible of our Analysis. This substance or material had been indeed, for the scientific world, during all those ages, a genuine mystery,—a product *sui generis* for the human mind to amuse itself with, and a source of childish delight therefore to some classes of 'Philosophers.' As it presented itself to us, we could make nothing of it. We could in no way connect it with a Spirit or the action of a Spirit. We had to content ourselves with the supposition that it was a product resulting from the unknown nature of the Absolute. But when Berkeley unexpectedly demonstrated, upon *a priori* principles, that every minutest fragment of this *caput mortuum* was an Idea or Sense-phenomenon, where were we? When he pointed out, to the commonest understanding, that upon further Analysis, the material itself which is invested with all this adaptation, variety and excellence of arrangement, is found, instead of being anything mysterious, to be simply of the phenomenal nature,—to be the familiar sort of thing known as an Idea,—an Idea of sense it is true, but still a true Idea; when in 1710, he published this most unexpected discovery, the natural question at once arose, 'Whence then these Ideas? Whence such objects of sense as these? From what sort of source can such things come? Common sense soon answered that such a product can only come from a Spirit—(ideas can come from nothing else)—from the Supreme Spirit then,—from the Absolute in its capacity as a Spirit,—from the same source as the design, the beauty, and the contrivance bestowed upon the working up of this material in the construction of the Universe. There was now no longer any difficulty,—now no longer any mystery. After Berkeley's expositions, the nature of the Material, of which the Universe consists, was manifest; and when once the nature or essence of this Material was discovered, its origin was instantly seen.

There is no spirit-action with which we are more familiar than this production of ideas, either in ourselves or others; nor can we even imagine how, without a spirit of some kind for it to come from, there could be such a product. When it was once known that the material substance of the Universe proceeding

from the unknown nature which we call the Absolute, was an idea, we saw at once (independently of all other proofs to the same effect) that Intelligence is within the characteristics or powers of that Unknown Cause;—in other words: that the unknown nature of this cause does not exclude Intelligence; for nothing but Intelligence could produce Ideas. But since it is the Absolute that furnishes this sense-thought,—since it is the Absolute that gives to these sense-ideas their existence,—we see, from what has been said above of “mere ideas” that the Absolute is also conscious of these sense-ideas (for what produces an idea is necessarily conscious of its product), and that, being exempt from the limitations of the human mind, it can be *permanently conscious* of it, rendering the sense-idea thus independent of all other consciousness, and so securing its permanence in nature as long as its laws require this permanence. This is all that Berkeley means when, in this section, he speaks of sensible objects or ideas of sense, as deriving their permanent existence from the permanent consciousness of the Absolute.

The further *a priori* proof of a supreme Intelligence thus unexpectedly afforded not only by the *Nature*, but also by the *Permanence* of material objects, is one of the many corollaries of the great central doctrine; and one which some of our critics have been superficial enough to speak of as the doctrine itself. Some even add that Berkeley had not been very successful in showing that nothing but Mind could produce ideas! and that he had therefore failed here to prove the existence of a Supreme Intelligence! which was, say they, the whole doctrine of the Treatise! The attentive reader of Berkeley will not fail to be astonished at these frivolous judgments.

### *Substratum and Substance.*

7. From what has been said, it follows, there is *not any other substance than spirit*, or that which perceives. But for the fuller proof of this point, let it be considered, the sensible qualities are colour, figure, motion, smell, taste, and such like, that is, the ideas perceived by sense. Now for an idea to exist in an unperceiving thing, is a manifest contradiction; for *to have an idea is all one as to perceive*:

that therefore wherein colour, figure, and the like qualities exist, must perceive them; hence it is clear there can be no *unthinking* substance or *substratum* of those ideas.

[‘Other substance than Spirit;’ *i.e.* as sustainer in existence, not as substratum. ‘In an unperceiving thing,’ *i.e.* unless this thing is within the mind. ‘To have an idea’ has two meanings. ‘No unthinking substratum,’ *i.e.* unless within the mind.]

Sometimes in this Treatise, as indeed by writers generally, the terms substratum and substance are used as synonymes; sometimes as significations opposed to one another. \* The ‘substratum’ is whatever we suppose to underlie the qualities of an object, and this is sometimes also called the ‘substance’ It is generally supposed to be without any qualities of its own, but to be in some mysterious way qualified by the qualities upon it. In stricter language, however, the term ‘substance’ is used to denote that by means of which another nature is rendered possible—that which maintains another nature in existence, without being either its substratum or its originator—that without which another nature could not be produced by whatever has produced it. Life is thus a sort of substance to pain, for without life it could not be produced; and in this sense Berkeley here says the human spirit is the substance of ideas. The ideas of sense, for instance, could not be produced without it; but it is not a substratum to them, for they do not qualify it; and it is not the producer of them. It is itself conscious that it is not so.

The substratum of qualities, on the contrary, is qualified by the ideas with which it is connected; and a main point for the reader here to attend to is: what is that which is *bonâ fide* qualified by these ideas? and what is that something which is, in this respect, *necessarily connected* with them? This, whatever it is, must be the true substratum or subject of the qualities. Now, the obvious answer is that the group itself of these qualities (which are also ideas) is the only thing which is qualified by them, and the only thing, in this sense, necessarily connected with them, since it could not exist without them. Here is then at once the subject or substratum, which is both natural and intelligible and *bonâ fide*. The group is the substratum of its own qualities. It needs no other, and this substratum has the immense advantage that it is within the mind. It is not like the substratum that Berkeley denies—a

ting beyond its own qualities and beyond the whole sensible Universe as well as beyond mind. The group itself answers every conceivable want that a quality can have, and was the natural conclusion to have come to when it was discovered that the millstone was a congeries of qualities massed together. There was no pretext for a further search. What our opponents require as a subject or substratum is something that without being mind can, through its own nature, enable mental things to be produced by their originator; and something that, in this capacity as substratum or subject of qualities, can exist *beyond* the visible Universe—*beyond* all sensible things, while it nevertheless *underlies* all these sensible things, and is their substratum,—two distinct impossibilities.

No one can here mistake what Berkeley means, though he states it with a brevity that might easily perplex the inattentive. In the first place he says that there is no substance but spirit. To understand this the reader must do him the justice to remember that in his first Section he tells us that the collection, congeries, cluster or group of sensible qualities (primary and secondary) constitutes the 'material substance' as it is called, which we name gold or iron, an apple or a stone, substances so familiar to us all, and (what is very important for the understanding of this point) that this unthinking substance or group of qualities has those qualities in it as *parts* of it, as things really *inherent* in its essence, and as *qualifying* it, not overlying it; although not, of course, as percipient nature is said to have these qualities or ideas in it, or as it has the whole group itself in it. For as this most exact author elsewhere fully explains, an idea of sense or sensible quality can exist both in the mind and in the group at the same time, since the group itself is in the mind; in the group, however, it exists not as an idea but as a quality, whereas in the mind it exists not as a quality at all, but as an idea only. In which way we are easily able to distinguish between the unthinking substance (gold or iron) called also material, physical, or corporeal substance, which can only have qualities, and the thinking or perceiving substance which can only have ideas. In the next place Berkeley says that for an idea to exist in an unperceiving thing is a manifest contradiction. While we acquiesce in this statement we must not forget that, as we have just seen, an idea can exist in its own group of ideas without the least self.



contradiction, although the group is as unthinking a thing as a single idea is. The reason of this is that the group itself exists within the mind. Berkeley nowhere objects to an unthinking substratum, subject, or substance that can be found within the mind,—that can be found to be a mental thing. No one objects to this. All that he quarrels with are the unintelligible objects, without any qualities, supposed to be *beyond* the sensible Universe and *beyond* the mind containing it, either under the name of 'substance' or under that of 'subject' and 'substratum.' The whole question is: Who dissents from him upon this point? Who, if they do, know what they are saying, and what their words mean or what our words mean? In these days it is thought desirable to speak even if we do not understand.

Berkeley also says that to have an idea means to perceive it. Here also we can easily agree with him. We can easily see what he means. We can, it is true, say of the group of ideas or qualities, which is called a millstone, that it has ideas in it; but the phrase perplexes no one. No one pretends to say that the group perceives what it has in it. These ideas are in it only as qualities; and in the mind only as ideas.

He further says that that in which colour and size exist, must perceive them. The substance, yes; but the subject or substratum, no. We see here clearly what Berkeley means, and it is what we can all assent to. When, therefore, he says there can be no unthinking substance or substratum of ideas, we see that he means only a substratum or unthinking substance *outside all mind*. He does not deny the unthinking substance which consists of sensible qualities, and therefore exists within the mind,—as described by him in his first section.

### *External mental (i.e., sensible) Objects. What?*

8. But, say you, though the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things *like* them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer, an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a colour or figure can be like nothing but another colour or figure. If we look but ever so little into our thoughts, we shall find it impossible for us to conceive a likeness except only

between our ideas. Again, I ask whether those supposed originals or external things, of which our ideas are the pictures or representations, be themselves perceivable or no? if they are, *then they are ideas*, and we have gained our point; but if you say they are not, I appeal to any one whether it be sense, to assert a colour is like something which is invisible; hard or soft, like something which is intangible; and so of the rest.

[‘Without the mind,’ *i.e.* invisible and intangible,—without any quality that the mind discerns;—beyond the remotest limits of the visible Universe, all which Universe is within mind.]

Here as everywhere the expressions ‘without, or outside the spirit’ and ‘external things,’ require careful attention. They mean not only beyond the whole range of mind and its operations, but also beyond and outside all that we see and feel,—beyond the whole sensible Universe. What is outside our Universe, we, of course, never see nor feel, nor know, nor can ever know anything about. The reader will not easily understand what is here meant until he clearly comprehends the common error, which is to the effect that the Spirit is something lodged within the head,—within the group of phenomena so called. This is the common notion of the physiologists. And, if it were true that the Spirit were thus within the skull, it would be clear that the sensible Universe would be also within the skull, since all are agreed that the sensible Universe is lodged within the mind, and depends on mind for this very possibility of its existence. Now this internality of the mind or spirit to the skull, is what our opponents believe, and seek to persuade others to believe; and thus when they speak of ‘external things,’ or when Berkeley speaks of these, and of things existing outside the mind or external to it, what we all mean are things not only beyond the range of the mind’s capacity, but also beyond the range of the Material Universe, which Universe is all found to consist of things contained within the mind. ‘External things,’ therefore, upon this subject, mean ‘things outside our Universe;’ and what we know, or can know of these things our opponents can best tell us. We even deny that they can say there are these things. What makes them think there are?

The error clearly begins in the supposition that the per-

ceiving power is *located* within the group of phenomena which we call the skull, although all acknowledge, even our opponents, that it is this group that is *located* within the perceiving power ; and not this little skull-group only, but all the rest of the known Universe,—all the rest of what we see and feel.

Every one can see the difference that has to be here taken account of. All that is outside, or external to, the skulls of animals, is, as we see it, to be, literally outside the coloured and tactual body so called ; whereas when we use the figurative expression, and speak of things as ‘outside the mind,’ or ‘without the mind’ (which has been so commonly done upon this subject), we thereby mean, as I have said, outside and beyond all that we see reasonable or that we know either by sense or otherwise. By ‘outside the Spirit’ we mean a thing which has no quality, by which a discerning power would be able to distinguish it from nothing ;—we mean the invisible, the intangible, the utterly insensible ; we mean something not only outside and beyond all Understandings ;—beyond all means of knowing and perceiving, but also outside and beyond all that is perceived and known,—outside then and beyond the whole sensible Universe. If our opponents could be brought to see that what they are here arguing for is for a Universe of things beyond the precincts of our Universe, it is difficult to imagine that they would see any grounds whatever for such a theory or any importance connected with it.

It is clear, however, that the first error to be shaken off by our opponents is that most extraordinary one about the sensible or mental Universe being within the head. With that, probably, would soon vanish the other more familiar error about the mind being there also. We should then have external things enough within the Universe and within the mind, without having to look for others beyond the nebulae ; and there can be no doubt that a clear knowledge of what these two blunders amount to will contribute sooner than anything to disperse them. It is in this hope that I have endeavoured, probably more than the reader will think necessary, to set them in the plainest possible words before him. I have endeavoured the more to do this, because Berkeley himself, here and elsewhere, passes over these errors altogether, attributing all to the abstract idea ; and instead of pointing them out, limits himself to merely indicating the utter groundlessness of the

further hypothesis by which these theorists sought to conceal the frivolity and absurdity of their notion, that the Spirit is located within a group of its own phenomena; this further hypothesis of theirs being that although the sensible (or material) Universe within our minds and within our view, is, as they think 'cabined' within our heads, yet there is *probably*, they think,—some say, *certainly*, others only, *possibly*,—another but insensible Universe, much larger than this, outside all knowledge and all mind; therefore, also, they think, outside all our heads. And further, this unphenomenal or insensible Universe which they suppose outside all mind, is, they hold, in some way like the phenomenal one. At this point Berkeley asks: How can that which is not pain be like pain, or that which is not weight be like weight, or that which is not hardness be like hardness? This, however, is not all that may here be asked. These theorists forget that the head itself, skull, brain and all, is a portion of the sensible Universe, whether this Universe is internal to our heads, as they say it is, or external to our heads, as we naturally hold it to be; and that it is utter nonsense to suppose a whole Sense-Universe to be within this extremely minute part of it!—in fact this minute part also to be located within itself!!—Have our theorists any meaning for these words?

*Error respecting the qualities of Sensations; i.e., the sensible qualities which are not Sensations.*

9. Some there are who make a *distinction* betwixt *primary* and *secondary* qualities: by the former, they mean extension, figure, motion, rest, solidity or impenetrability, and number: by the latter they denote all other sensible qualities, as colours, sounds, tastes, and so forth. The ideas we have of these they acknowledge not to be the resemblances of anything existing without the mind or unperceived; but they will have our ideas of the primary qualities to be patterns or images of things which exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance which they call *matter*. By *matter* therefore we are to understand an inert, senseless substance, in which extension, figure, and

motion, *do actually subsist*. But it is evident from what we have already shown, that extension, figure, and motion, are *only ideas existing in the mind*, and that an idea can be like nothing but another idea, and that consequently neither they nor their archetypes can exist in an *unperceiving substance*. Hence it is plain, that the very notion of what is called *matter*, or *corporeal substance*, involves a contradiction in it.

[‘Without the mind or unperceived;’ *i.e.* outside the universe of sense. ‘Without the mind in an unthinking substance’ or ‘unperceiving substance;’ whereas they can exist in this sort of substratum, or substance within the mind,—within the sensible universe. ‘Matter,’ *i.e.* insensible, undiscernible matter. ‘Corporeal substance;’ this, outside our Universe of sense, could not have sensible qualities upon it nor in it; but inside mind and this Universe it can and has.]

The sensible qualities of which material objects wholly consist, are here distinguished into sensations and their qualities; sensations called sometimes secondary qualities, such as feels and colours, tastes and sounds; and the qualities of sensations (*i.e.* qualities delineated by sensations), called also sometimes primary qualities such as motion, shape, and size. The quality of a sensation, as the duration of a sound or the shape of a colour, is as much a sense-phenomenon,—mental thing or idea of sense,—as the sensation itself is, or as a group of such things is, existing therefore, by the aid of mind and within the Universe of sense; but outside the skull, in the various objects of the Universe. It having been observed that some material qualities were sensations and others not, people fancied that those which were not sensations, were not sensible qualities at all, but things outside the Universe, and outside the mind. This error, however, seems to exist no longer.

*Of undelineated or absolute Space (i.e. absolute Size), and of absolute or abstract Shape.*

10. They who assert that figure, motion, and the rest of the primary or original qualities, do exist without the mind, in *unthinking substances*, do at the same time acknowledge that colours, sounds, heat, cold, and such like secondary qualities, do not, which they tell us are sensations existing

*in the mind alone*, that depend on and are occasioned by the different size, texture, and motion of the minute particles of matter. This they take for an undoubted truth, which they can demonstrate beyond all exception. Now if it be certain, that those original qualities *are inseparably united with the other sensible qualities*, and not, even in thought, capable of being abstracted from them, it plainly follows that they exist only in the mind. But I desire any one to reflect and try, whether he can, by any abstraction of thought, conceive the extension and motion of a body, without all other sensible qualities. For my own part, I see evidently that it is not in my power to frame an idea of a body extended and moved, but I must withal give it some colour or other sensible quality which is *acknowledged* to exist only in the mind. In short, extension, figure, and motion, abstracted from all other qualities, are inconceivable. Where therefore the other sensible qualities are, there must these be also, to wit, in the mind and nowhere else.

Here as everywhere the reader must carefully observe that 'outside the mind' means outside and beyond the sensible Universe, because this Universe is, as all now admit, a mental thing, consisting wholly of sensible qualities and their laws. Berkeley here points out the unreasonableness of supposing (as they did in his day), that the feels and colours of objects were in one part of nature, and their shapes and sizes in another. He mentions here, likewise, the error of his contemporaries about the space which has no delineation,—abstract or independent, sometimes called absolute, space. But this also is now-a-days, by most writers, given up as an absurdity and mere oversight incident to their first studies. For after all what sort of extension is that which is marked out by nothing? Abstract space in which to place a material Universe,—what is it? Is it not clear that this Universe would bring its own size or space with it? And that this is a *sensuous* or *sensible* quality, just as shape is, and, therefore, existing within mind where alone things sensible or sensuous can exist and constitute substances? No one speaks of ~~undelineated~~ or absolute shape. (See Sections 116 & 117.)

*Further of undelineated or insensible Qualities.*

11. Again, *great and small, swift and slow, are allowed to exist nowhere without the mind*, being entirely relative, and changing as the frame or position of the organs of sense varies. The extension, therefore, which exists without the mind is neither great nor small, the motion neither swift nor slow—that is, they are nothing at all. But, say you, they are extension in general and motion in general: thus we see how much the tenet of extended movable substances existing without the mind depends on that strange doctrine of *abstract ideas*. And here I cannot but remark how nearly the vague and indeterminate description of matter or corporeal substance, which the modern philosophers are run into by their own principles, resembles that antiquated and so much ridiculed notion of *materia prima* to be met with in Aristotle and his followers. Without extension solidity cannot be conceived; since, therefore, it has been shown that extension exists not in an unthinking substance, the same must also be true of solidity.

12. That *number* is entirely *the creature of the mind*, even though the other qualities be allowed to exist without, will be evident to whoever considers that the same thing bears a different denomination of number as the mind views it with different respects. Thus, the same extension is one, or three, or thirty-six, according as the mind considers it with reference to a yard, a foot, or an inch. Number is so visibly relative, and dependent on men's understanding, that it is strange to think how any one should give it an absolute existence without the mind. We say one book, one page, one line; all these are equally units, though some contain several of the others. And in each instance it is plain the unit relates to some particular combination of ideas arbitrarily put together by the mind.

13. *Unity*, I know, some will have to be *a simple or uncompounded idea*, accompanying all other ideas into the mind. That I have any such idea, answering the word

*unity*, I do not find—and if I had methinks I could not miss finding it ; on the contrary, it should be the most familiar to my understanding, since it is said to accompany all other ideas, and to be perceived by all the ways of sensation and reflection. To say no more, it is an *abstract idea*.

14. I shall further add that, after the same manner as modern philosophers prove certain sensible qualities to have no existence in matter, or without the mind, the same thing may be likewise proved of all other sensible qualities whatsoever. Thus, for instance, it is said that heat and cold are affections only of the mind, and not at all patterns of real beings, existing in the corporeal substances which excite them, for that the same body which appears cold to one hand seems warm to another. Now why may we not as well argue that figure and extension are not patterns or resemblances of qualities existing in matter, because to the same eye at different stations, or eyes of a different texture at the same station, they appear various, and cannot therefore be the images of anything *settled and determinate without the mind*? Again, it is proved that *sweetness* is not really in the sapid thing, because, the thing remaining unaltered, the sweetness is changed into bitter, as in case of a fever or otherwise vitiated palate. Is it not as reasonable to say that *motion* is not without the mind, since if the succession of ideas in the mind become swifter, the motion, it is acknowledged, shall appear slower without any alteration in any external object?

15. In short, let any one consider those arguments which are thought manifestly to prove that colours and tastes exist only in the mind, and he shall find they may with equal force be brought to prove the same thing of extension, figure, and motion. Though it must be confessed this method of arguing doth not so much prove that there is no extension or colour in an outward object as that we do not know by *sense* which is the *true* extension or colour of the object. But the arguments foregoing plainly show it to be impossible that any colour or extension at all, or



other sensible quality whatsoever, should exist in an *unthinking* subject without the mind, or in truth that there should be any such thing as an outward object.

[‘Unthinking substances,’ ‘absolute existence,’ ‘matter,’ ‘corporeal substances,’ ‘unthinking subjects,’ ‘outward objects;’ i.e. such things outside the sensible universe and the mind; for within the mind and universe all these things can exist and do exist, having in them, as parts of them, sensations and the other sensible qualities.]

Various further explanations are here given of the fact (too obvious, one should have thought, to need any explanation, even in Berkeley’s day) that there cannot even be imagined, to say nothing of there being in *rerum naturâ*, such things as shape, size, number, and movement, unless they are the shape, size, number, and movement of something. They cannot therefore, be found anywhere except so combined; not anywhere, for instance, where it is admitted that there is nothing else existing,—nothing by which they can be marked out and delineated,—nothing that can have shape or space,—nothing that can be moved or numbered. They are simply qualities of the Sense-phenomena, existing only where these Phenomena are.

*Substance in the sense of Subject or Substratum.*

16. But let us examine a little the received opinion. It is said *extension* is a *mode* or accident of *matter*, and that *matter* is the *substratum* that supports it. Now I desire that you would explain what is meant by matter’s *supporting* extension. Say you, I have no idea of matter, and therefore cannot explain it. I answer, Though you have no positive, yet if you have any meaning at all you must at least have a relative idea of matter; though you know not what it is, yet you must be supposed to know what relation it bears to accidents, and what is meant by its supporting them. It is evident *support* cannot here be taken in its usual or literal sense, as when we say that pillars support a building: in what sense, therefore, must it be taken?

17. If we inquire into what the most accurate philosophers declare themselves to mean by *material substance*, we shall find them acknowledge, they have no other meaning

annexed to those sounds, but the idea of *being in general*, together with the relative notion of its supporting accidents. The general idea of being appeareth to me the most abstract and incomprehensible of all other; and as for its supporting accidents, this, as we have just now observed, cannot be understood in the common sense of those words; it must therefore be taken in some other sense, but what that is they do not explain. So that when I consider the *two parts* or branches which make the signification of the words *material substance*, I am convinced there is no distinct meaning annexed to them. But why should we trouble ourselves any further, in discussing this material *substratum* or support of figure and motion, and other sensible qualities? does it not suppose they have an existence without the mind? and is not this a direct repugnancy, and altogether inconceivable?

[ (16) 'Matter,' i.e., the intangible and invisible kind,—that beyond the operation of intelligence, for sensible matter, being within this action and within the universe, can be and always is, the substratum of its own qualities, the sensible cannot qualify the insensible (17) Does it not suppose,' &c. Sensible qualities cannot have the insensible nature of the supposed extramundane and extramental things ]

Percipient substance here means that under the condition of which sensible objects can be produced by that, whatever it is, which produces them. Nothing for instance can produce pain without the percipient nature. This, then, is called its 'substance' by those who still use that very useless and unmeaning term.

The material and non-percipient substance is that which we sometimes call a subject, support, or substratum, and which is supposed to prevent the sensible qualities of an object from falling about. Of this we reckon, it seems, two kinds: that which is sensible and that which is insensible—the kind which, being itself sensible, can have and has its sensible qualities upon it, and the kind which is supposed to be itself utterly insensible—utterly beyond the sphere of all sensible qualities, yet somehow to have these sensible qualities in some figurative way upon it. This latter is called 'occult matter,' the material substance or substratum denied by Berkeley. Yet how, we may here ask, can that be spoken of

as the substratum of qualities which it is admitted are not in the same place as it is;—on which therefore, it is admitted, they do not really lie. No one answers this question nor can answer it. Thus we see that there is no other material<sup>r</sup> substance in the sense of substratum except that commonly known as such, viz., the sensible group itself of sensible qualities, which group is qualified by these qualities, of which group each quality is a part, and in which group each quality exists. This group, however, is no abstract insensible substratum of sensible qualities outside the universe of sense. We cannot confound it either with the unperceiving substance denied by Berkeley or with the perceiving substance which he asserts as the *sine quâ non* of the sensible Universe as well as it is the *sine quâ non* of pain.

There is then we find spoken of a sensible substratum and an insensible one,—one within our Universe and one outside it; also a perceiving substance and an unperceiving one,—in which sense the perceiving one is never the substratum; and there is a sense in which substance and substratum are, as here, synonymous. We must be very careful in making these distinctions; which, in all writings on this subject, have been too often neglected or lost sight of altogether.

*Externality to the Skull, to the Universe, and to the Mind.*

18. But though it were possible that solid, figured, moveable substances may exist without the mind, corresponding to the ideas we have of bodies, yet *how is it possible for us to know this?* either we must know it by sense, or by reason. As for our senses, by them we have the knowledge *only of our sensations*, ideas, or those things that are immediately perceived by sense, call them what you will: but they do not inform us that things exist without the mind, or unperceived, like to those which are perceived. This the materialists themselves acknowledge. It remains therefore that if we have any knowledge, at all of external things, it must be by *reason*, inferring their existence from what is immediately perceived by sense. But I do not see what reason can induce us to believe the existence of bodies

without the mind, from what we perceive, since the very patrons of matter themselves do not pretend there is *any necessary connexion betwixt them and our ideas*. I say, it is granted on all hands, and what happens in dreams, frenzies, and the like, puts it beyond dispute, that *it is possible we might be affected with all the ideas we have now, though no bodies existed without, resembling them*. Hence it is evident the supposition of external bodies is not necessary for the producing our ideas: since it is granted they are produced sometimes, and might possibly be produced always, in the same order we see them in at present, without their concurrence.

19. But though we might possibly have all our sensations without them, yet perhaps it may be thought *easier* to conceive and explain the *manner* of their production, by supposing external bodies in their likeness rather than otherwise; and so it might be at least probable there are such things as bodies that excite their ideas in our minds. But neither can this be said; for though we give the materialists their external bodies, they, by their own confession, are never the nearer knowing how our ideas are produced: since they own themselves unable to comprehend in what manner *body can act upon spirit*, or how it is possible it should imprint any idea in the mind. Hence it is evident, the production of ideas or sensations in our minds can be no reason why we should suppose matter or corporeal substances, *since that is acknowledged to remain equally inexplicable with or without this supposition*. If therefore it were possible for bodies to exist without the mind, yet to hold they do so must needs be a very precarious opinion; since it is to suppose, without any reason at all, that God has created innumerable beings *that are entirely useless, and serve to no manner of purpose*.

20. In short, if there were external bodies, it is impossible we should ever come to know it; and if there were not, we might have the very same reasons to think there were that we have now. Suppose, what no one can deny possible, an

intelligence, without the help of external bodies, to be affected with the same train of sensations or ideas that you are, imprinted in the same order and with like vividness in his mind. I ask, whether that intelligence hath not all the reason to believe the existence of corporeal substances, represented by his ideas, and exciting them in his mind, that you can possibly have for believing the same thing? Of this there can be no question; which one consideration is enough to make any reasonable person suspect the strength of whatever arguments he may think himself to have for the existence of bodies without the mind.

[(18.) 'Without the mind;' i.e. beyond its operations and its nature. This does not mean 'outside the skull;' for of course all the sensible Universe and its qualities are outside the skull. The sensible skull is within the mind, not outside it.—'Producing our ideas;' i.e. our objects of sense,—ideas of sense, sense-phenomena, sensible matter. (19.) 'Supposing external bodies;' i.e. insensible bodies beyond the visible Universe. 'Their ideas;' i.e. the objects of sense, ideas of sense, or sensible bodies, supposed to be produced by their insensible bodies. 'Corporeal substances,' here used to signify 'producers,' not substrata;—therefore, insensible producers;—a separate one for each object of sense, and, perhaps, for each separate quality. (20.) 'External bodies,' i.e. external to the Universe and to all mental action as well as to the skull;—the internal bodies being those, vast and many, which, although external to the skull, are both within the Universe, and within the operations of the spirit.]

Is not the sensible material Universe with its laws, enough for every purpose? Why suppose another,—an insensible one beyond its remotest limits,—the remotest limits of all sensible space,—entirely unadapted to our faculties, and beyond all possibility of its being ever perceived? For this is what our opponents here pretend to.

Some of those who suppose that there is this Universe beyond our own,—this insensible Universe which they think so important for the planetary revolutions,—tell us frankly, they do not know why they suppose it to exist; they do not see precisely what object it is to effect; for they admit there can be nothing more real and matter of fact, or more completely sufficient for every conceivable purpose, than what we here call sensations, and those other mental things which are the qualities of sensations, and the solid, big, hard and heavy groups or objects made up of these very real things; they also admit that they do not well see how their hypothesis, a strange

thing even in their own eyes, could, by any possibility, account for the ideas of sense, *i.e.*, for the sensible objects which constitute the Universe by which we are surrounded. But these enlightened men, for such, from their admissions they appear to be, forget that when they admit this, they admit all that we ask them to admit. They admit that they consider it unreasonable and contrary to all scientific principle (or, as they express this, *outside* all reason and *outside* all science) to suppose that there is this utterly transmundane system of objects, sizeless and colourless, entirely beyond our knowledge and entirely different from the sort of thing to which the organs of sense are naturally adapted. This is all that Berkeley or any of us seeks to insist upon. We do not mean to say *too dogmatically* that there may not be an invisible elephant now before us in this room. We only mean to say that to suppose one is not only gratuitous and groundless, but unreasonable, unscientific, and frivolous.

Others of our opponents, however, have a stronger and more definite point against us. They suppose us apparently to deny a supreme Cause, and this of course would be as frivolous as anything. But let us look a little into each other's reasonings. They naturally want a source or originator for the sensible or material universe—something to present it to percipient nature, or, as they express it, 'to excite it within the mind;' and they wish (if we could only be prevailed upon to allow them) to call this origin or source by the same name as its product has. As it has produced a Universe, they propose to call it 'a Universe'—the only difference in the name being, that the one is an insensible Universe, the other being a visible and tangible one. They are driven to this peculiarity of name by the excessive peculiarity of their hypothesis. They begin by supposing the sensible material Universe to be something within the area of their skull; and they then naturally look for some cause of this, outside their skull, which cause shall somehow seem like its product, so that it also may be called 'a Universe,' and its insensible details, although without any qualities, be called objects, one corresponding to each object in the microscopic universe of sense within the skull, and called moreover by the same name as the sensible object to which it corresponds. This is what they mean when they speak of an insensible system of things beyond the ken of sense and reason. They believe all

sense, as well as reason or mind, to be inside the skull, and all that the mind perceives by sense to be with it there;—both of these, preposterous errors. They cannot, however, well avoid therefore this conclusion about an unknown Universe outside the known one, and full of substrata, by courtesy called objects, but without any qualities whatever on them,—without shape or size or feel or colour. Their supposing that there is unknown something, to be called a Universe external to the skull, cannot be much wondered at, when they once came to the wild conclusion that the skull contained within its very limited area all that they saw and felt. But the question is, why come to this first conclusion at all? Why suppose that all that we see and feel is within the skull? Why suppose all the rest of the sensible Universe to be inside one small bit of it? Can any philosophical nonsense exceed this? Let these strugglers after truth first recognize the common-sense fact that the sensible Universe, although a mental thing and within the powers of the mind, is nevertheless entirely outside our heads, and all its objects of great and manifold sizes, at great and manifold distances outside each other, just as the peasant, no less than the philosopher sees them to be and feels them to be. When they recognize this supreme practical fact, they will then be in a much better condition to look for the source of the sensible Universe,—to look for that which excites it within our minds,—than if they foolishly begin by supposing the sensuous mass to be something enclosed within the walls of that minute portion of it known as the human skull, and all known space, all visible size, to be diminished into less than one square foot.

We Berkeleians also hold that there is a cause of our sensible Universe; and as we, unlike our opponents, consider our Universe a reality, we hold very strongly that its cause is, and requires to be a reality also. Our cause of the Universe, however, we do not call 'a Universe,' being of an entirely different nature. We call it the Absolute or the Supreme Cause; and we regard it as something wholly distinct from its product, *i.e.* from that which is not the Absolute. We, therefore, do not call the producer by the name of the product, as our opponents do. We do not call the watchmaker 'a watch,' nor do we call the cause of the Universe, 'a Universe,' nor the cause of a tree, 'a tree.' We look upon that sort of confusion as unscientific in the extreme.

*The Doctrine, an A PRIORI Principle.*

21. Were it necessary to add any further proof against the existence of matter,\* after what has been said, I could instance several of those errors and difficulties, not to mention impieties, which have sprung from that tenet. It has occasioned numberless controversies and disputes in philosophy, and not a few of greater moment in religion. But I shall not enter into the detail of them in this place, as well because I think arguments *à posteriori* are unnecessary for confirming what has been, if I mistake not, sufficiently demonstrated *à priori*, as because I shall hereafter find occasion to say somewhat of them.

[‘Existence of matter,’ i.e. the occult and ‘scientific’ or immaterial matter of Berkeley’s time, supposed to exist outside the remotest limits of visible space. A sort of matter without material qualities and not adapted to the human faculties;—therefore not placed within our Universe.]

The *à priori* principle in question is that Sense-ideas (the objects of sense) cannot exist except in and by means of minds;—that whatever may produce them, they can only be produced under condition of Spirit or Percipient Nature,—they can only be maintained in permanent existence and kept together in their groups by the Spirit as their substance, and their own groups as their substrata; that, if instead of minds as now for them to exist in, there were nothing in nature that could perceive ideas, these things called ideas could not exist at all; and no one now denies that this is an *à priori* principle.

Berkeley truly here says that when once it is proved *à priori* that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, it is useless and frivolous to endeavour to prove this further by cutting bits of paper or by measuring with a scale.

The *à priori* character of Berkeley’s doctrine, is, as I say, now fully recognized by all metaphysicians, and even by all other scientific men in England who have studied the subject, except the half-dozen already alluded to; and even these, although they seek ostensibly to disparage the discovery and the discoverer, speak of what they consider its faults in the vaguest terms, and seem to have their attention solely



directed to the unextended and immaterial thing which, beyond the range of mind and space, is supposed by them to correspond, in some unknown way, to the sensible Universe which we have in space. This unextended thing, without any of the qualities of matter, some few writers seek to call 'a Universe,' an unextended and immaterial Universe; which seems to be mere childishness. Others, however, some of them even physiologists, but apparently with reluctance, call this immaterial nature beyond ours 'a substance' of which they say it would be 'the summit of human wisdom' not to deny the existence; and with these we can cordially agree; although they still continue in unintelligible terms a subdued growl against our doctrine and against its founder.

*Independent of the Senses does not mean independent of the Mind.*

22. I am afraid I have given cause to think me needlessly prolix in handling this subject. For to what purpose is it to dilate on that which may be demonstrated with the utmost evidence in a line or two, to any one that is capable of the least reflection? it is but looking into your own thoughts, and so trying whether you can conceive it possible for a sound, or figure, or motion, or colour, to exist without the mind, or unperceived. This easy trial may make you see, that what you contend for is a downright contradiction. Inasmuch that I am content to put the whole upon this issue; if you can but *conceive* it possible for one extended moveable substance, or in general, for any one idea, or any thing like an idea, to exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving it, I shall readily give up the cause: and as for all that *compages* of external bodies which you contend for, I shall grant you its existence, though you cannot either give me any reason why you believe it exists, or assign any use to it when it is supposed to exist. I say, the bare possibility of your opinion's being true, shall pass for an argument that it is so.

23. But say you, surely there is nothing easier than to imagine trees, for instance, in a park, or books existing in a

closet, and nobody by to perceive them. I answer, you may say so, there is no difficulty in it: but what is all this, I beseech you, more than framing in your mind certain ideas which you call *books* and *trees*, and at the same time omitting to frame the idea of any one that may perceive them? *but do not you yourself perceive or think of them all the while?* this therefore is nothing to the purpose; it only shows you have the power of imagining or forming ideas in your mind; but it doth not show that you can conceive it possible the objects of your thought may exist without the mind: to make out this, *it is necessary that you conceive them existing unconceived or unthought-of, which is a manifest repugnancy.* When we do our utmost to conceive the existence of external bodies, we are all the while only contemplating our own ideas. But the mind, taking no notice of itself, is deluded to think it can and doth conceive bodies existing unthought-of or without the mind; though at the same time they are apprehended by or exist in itself. A little attention will discover to any one the truth and evidence of what is here said, and make it unnecessary to insist on any other proofs against the existence of material substance.

24. It is very obvious, upon the least inquiry into our own thoughts, to know whether it be possible for us to understand what is meant by the *absolute existence of sensible objects in themselves or without the mind.* To me it is evident those words mark out either a direct contradiction, or else nothing at all. And to convince others of this, I know no readier or fairer way, than to entreat they would calmly attend to their own thoughts: and if by this attention the emptiness or repugnancy of those expressions does appear, surely nothing more is requisite for their conviction. It is on this therefore that I insist, to wit, that the *absolute existence of unthinking things* are words without a meaning, or which include a contradiction. This is what I repeat and inculcate, and earnestly recommend to the attentive thoughts of the reader.

[ (22.) 'A sound, or figure, or motion, or colour;' *i.e.* as soon as science has once made us acquainted with the remarkable fact that these are ideas,—ideas of sense;—of which, sounds and colour, tastes, feels, and odours, are sensations, figure, motion, space (or size), are qualities of sensations.—'Campages of external bodies;' *i.e.* insensible 'bodies,'—with the nature unadapted to our faculties and located beyond the range of sense and beyond the limits of visible space. (23.) 'But say you,' &c., to 'all the while.' Berkeley in these words recognizes the permanent existence of the Poem or the History; but, instead of reasserting it, he hastens to the explanation of it. 'Material substance;' *i.e.* any other except the group of qualities so called, and which exists in mind;—as defined, Sec. 9, 'an inert senseless substance in which extension, figure, and motion do actually subsist.' This within mind is a common fact of nature; but what, outside mind, could not subsist at all. (24.) 'This is what I earnestly recommend,' &c. The only difficulty for the student here is to learn that the objects of sense are combinations of ideas; and matter therefore an idea of sense; for there is really no difficulty for any one in getting to see that there can be no ideas where there is no mind.]

We have here again the question first raised in the third section of the Treatise. *viz.*, How can this phenomenal nature of material things be made to accord with that unintermittent existence which we are all conscious of their having. The supposed difficulty which we are here asked to explain belongs solely to the blundering theories of our opponents. Nature presents no such difficulty whatever, and there is none such in our doctrine, as that in which these theorists here find themselves entangled.

They think that the object of sense is created by the senses; whereas this object exists entirely independent of the senses, and goes on existing as completely when we are not conscious of it as when we are. It consists of sensations and their qualities, whose existence in nature can be completely unintermittent,—unintermittent, therefore, also the object which consists of such things. The organs of sense are the occasions on which, or the conditions under which these things are perceived, not the occasions on which, or the conditions under which these things are brought into existence. Sensations, as for instance, feels and colours, and their qualities, as for instance, shape and space, or size, have the same sort of incessantly permanent existence as the mere ideas of such things have, or as our knowledge of things has; and are not, therefore, produced on our becoming conscious of them; but on the contrary exist always independently of us, whether we are conscious of them or not. But on this point enough has been already said in the remarks on Section 3.

As the expressions 'inside mind' and 'outside mind,'—also 'within' and 'without' it, are so much used in connexion with this subject, it may be useful to draw the reader's attention to their import a little more than has been done by others. 'Without the mind' or 'outside the mind' is not used to denote what we are not just then thinking of, nor what we have forgotten, nor does it mean the unknown. It means *of a nature wholly unadapted to be known,—to be the subject of mental action,—wholly unadapted to the understanding.* It means, therefore, that which cannot either be known or unknown, forgotten or remembered, thought of or not thought of. It therefore means very much our 'nothing.' To think that 'beyond' the mind or 'without' the mind means too far away for the organs of sense or too difficult to be understood are mere misapprehensions of the expression. Anything, therefore, that is known, although just then unthought of, anything that can be known or that even can be forgotten, or that is forgotten, is within the mind's action, or as we say 'within the mind.' No one can deny the possibility of its existence. This is true of anything whose nature is such that the understanding can deal with it; but, after the understanding itself, ideas are the only nature of which this is true. They are the only materials with which the mind can work,—the only materials besides itself adapted to its action. 'To be within the mind,' then, means 'to be an idea' whether this idea is *present* to the mind or not; and 'to be an idea' means 'to be within the province of mind,'—'to be within its sphere of action.' On the other hand, not to be an idea' means not to be within that province or action; and 'to be outside the mind' means, *vice versa*, 'not to be an idea.' Thus just as we cannot conceive (Section 3) a thinking thing within the mind where ideas alone subsist, so we cannot even imagine unthinking things outside it; as, for instance, the unthinking things supposed to be outside it by our opponents. All our knowledge is therefore limited to unthinking things in the mind and to thinking things outside it. Thus, also, we see that our ideas, whether we are occupied about them or not, are within the mind; *i.e.*, they remain ideas; for as has been just said, 'to be an idea' means 'to be something within the mind.' Our ideas then of both kinds are always in the mind,—those of sense and those that are not of sense,—those in space and those not in space; (*i.e.*, with qualities of size connected with them)

—the sensible and the insensible phenomena;—and the mind can perceive them when it chooses to take or when it can take the necessary steps,—when it employs the appointed condition for perceiving them. And let it be added that one portion of the mind's action and nature is to preserve all mental things, and itself as well as these mental things, in permanent existence notwithstanding all the intervals of unconsciousness, or absent attention that may have occurred to it or them; and that the trees in the park and the books in the library with all their sensible qualities called feels and colours exist permanently, and exist in mind (as alone they could exist at all), although the organs of sense supposed to convey these to the mind in which they exist, are far away in quite another place.

In Section 23, Berkeley speaks only of our mere ideas of sensible objects, and of their dependence upon mind. In Section 22, he speaks of sensible objects themselves and of the extent to which mental action is an essential in their existence, adverting in Section 24 to this same dependence of the sense-phenomena upon percipient nature although not upon its being at any moment conscious of them; for by 'absolute existence,' he always means an existence of these objects as independent of mind as it is of consciousness; a sort of existence of which even our opponents begin to see the absurdity. As however, they suppose these sensible objects to be created by the senses, and to cease existing whenever we are unconscious of them, they adopt the most childish of theories to replace, as they think, the non-intermission of existence which they thus most childishly deny. Without knowing something of these theories we should never fully understand the difference between scientific men and these Anti-Berkeleyians; and for this reason, I endeavour to keep them before the reader's mind as much as possible. It may be useful, therefore, to recapitulate them here; for to indicate them distinctly is always to disprove them.

The whole question stands thus:—The only unthinking things we know of (Sec. 1) are sensible qualities and their groups (objects of sense, a chair, for instance, or a table) as well as our mere ideas of such, and the groups of these 'mere ideas'—a History, for instance, or a Poem. Berkeley here reminds you that all such things are mental things and cannot possibly be anything else; that they cannot exist absolutely;

that they cannot exist outside all mind; *i.e.*, cannot exist except under condition of and through the existence of mind; and he bids you reflect HOW or WHY a poem or a colour exists (and exists permanently), when no mind is conscious of it; when we do not perceive it; when the one is not thought of and the other not seen. It is clear that they then exist, just as they do at any other time, the colours in the dark, and the noise where no one hears it, as well as the Poem or the History, when no one thinks of it. The only question is this *how* or this *why*. How does an idea exist, or why does it exist, through the mind's existence and within the mind in this permanent way, when the mind itself is unconscious of it? Whence all this unbroken permanence of which we are conscious in our knowledge of things, and in our sense-phenomena themselves from one day to another, merely because they are mental things, this manifest identity before and after and throughout the interval of unconsciousness? How do we account for it? This is the whole question and the whole fact of nature and of conscious knowledge which presents it, and which has caused at this point the bewilderment of our opponents, giving rise to their most curious theories. What is the origin of this permanence? How do we explain it? How do they do so?

We explain this, as already pointed out, by the obvious principle that the mind throws its own permanence over all mental things,—over all its phenomena,—with no other exceptions to their permanence than those resulting from what we call and know as the established laws of nature. We see that our knowledge of Greek for instance could not subsist from one day to another if the mind did not preserve it; this knowledge derives this permanence wholly from its mental connexion; and what we see so clearly in this case, is what is also true in the case of all other mental things. They derive their permanence from that of the nature through whose existence they exist, and thus the sense phenomena which we call a picture, and a watch, both mental things, carry out all night these laws of nature quite as well as when we are looking at them. There is here for us no question whatever of an intermittent existence.

Our opponents, on the contrary, begin their explanation of this great fact by roundly denying it. They deny that there is any of this permanence, that we speak of, in sensible (or mental) things, during the intervals in which we are uncon-

scious of them. They hold that all our ideas and all our knowledge have an intermittent existence wholly dependent on our being conscious of them, and, therefore, really have none of that ceaseless duration which we think they have, their existence being only one constantly possible, and entirely dependent upon our senses.

They begin here with the strange misconception, that since consciousness can be an attribute of mind, to be 'outside' the one, means to be 'outside' the other; to be outside our consciousness means to be outside, and, as they also say, 'external to,' the mind. But the error here is manifest. A Poem can have no existence, external to mind, although we find it can have existence external to consciousness,—an enduring subsistence while we are utterly unconscious of it.

This, however, is only the first step in their theory, the first instalment of their most unaccountable blundering. Allowing themselves once to think, as most of them do, that a mere idea or combination of such (a Poem or a History, for instance,) can have no existence outside the consciousness and independent of it, they very naturally think the same respecting the other ideas,—the sensible objects,—the ideas of sense or the Sense-phenomena, in short the mental things which are sensible. These, they in like manner consider, cannot subsist at all outside consciousness, *i.e.*, when we are not conscious of them, when we do not perceive them, any more than 'mere ideas,'—the ideas which we have of such things,—can. They, therefore, suppose that these Sense-phenomena also (upon the same absurd principle of intermittent existence for all phenomena) cease to exist the moment we become unconscious of them, without any reference to their natural changes or to those permanent laws of nature which are carried out in them by means of their permanence. Our opponents suppose that the light and colours go out of the room when we go out of it, and that our very faces cease to exist,—lose all delineation of feels and colours, and shape and size,—when there is no one looking at us.

To remedy this preposterous result of their preposterous convictions, they have a further theory about a sort of thing ('object' they call it, although it is not, they own, an object of human knowledge, some even name it 'substance,' but all admit that when they speak of it they do not know what they

are speaking about)—a sort of thing which they believe to be always invisibly, at hand, and to be substituted in nature for the sensible objects, ~~when~~ we are not conscious of them, and when these objects or groups of sensible qualities are, therefore, as our opponents then believe, entirely non-existent; and they devise all this apparatus for sensible objects, although they seem to have no such theory to account for the permanence of 'mere ideas' (the other kind of phenomena or mental things), during the supposed extramental hours of these mere ideas.

But to go on. They become confirmed in this extraordinary hypothesis of an insensible substitute for sensible things when we are not conscious of them, through another hypothesis if possible still more extraordinary than the first. They consider that all Sense-phenomena, as well as mere ideas of Sense-phenomena, not only have this intermittent existence requiring the above fiction, but that all these sensible qualities and their groups are things located within the skulls of animals. What! it will naturally be asked, all the objects of sense—all that is tactual and visual in the Universe—within the human skull? The whole sensible Universe there? Yes, astounding as the thing may seem, every object of sense is, by their theory and convictions, within that small space. It is there according to them that the whole of what is sensible, with all its seeming vastness (for 'seeming' is all they allow it to be) is lodged, and there that it exists intermittingly, as alone they suppose all phenomena to exist. They therefore determine not unnaturally that this cannot be the real Universe—that the real Universe cannot be the sensible one, nor the Sense-phenomena any real parts of the Universe. They have here then a problem quite as gratuitous and quite as difficult to solve as that in the case of a permanent existence for these sensible objects. Here also however they exhibit what they term their 'characteristic boldness,' and, as I say, begin the explanation of this second hypothesis by at once denying the great fact which they have to deal with,—the real existence of all that we see and feel (of all sensible qualities and all groups of such, even while we are conscious of them)—the only sensible reality which their first hypothesis had left us. They undertake however, they say, to provide another reality for these Sense-phenomena, thus shorn of their own natural reality by this Skull-theory; and their



mode of doing this is by establishing a further hypothesis to the effect that there are, outside our skulls, other more trustworthy objects—realities, they call them—not sense-objects, it is true, nor even like sense-objects, but in some unknown way corresponding to them (for on this point also our opponents admit that they are utterly ignorant, and know nothing whatever about what they are speaking about), which unknown things, although placed outside our skulls, produce, it is supposed, all the sensible things inside our skulls. But the bulkier part of the hypothesis remains to be told. These unextended ‘things’ themselves, devoid of all material quality, and placed outside the skull, are to be supposed, contrary to the hypothesis, enlarged to all the required sizes and distances, in order thus to correspond in reality with those which the sense-phenomena inside our skull so illusively seem to have. I have here said ‘contrary to the hypothesis,’ because space (whether as size or distance) is a sensible quality; which, by the hypothesis proposed, cannot be outside the skull. With the exception however of this flaw, the Skull-theory coincides, it must be confessed, most convincingly with the theory of intermittent existence, since here also we have the sensible and insensible object in every case of perception.

As these theorists suppose the Spirit or Mind or Ego to be with its phenomena of all kinds within the skull, and all the rest of the Universe, as they understand it (viz., the hypothetical portions) outside the skull, they look upon these unknown hypothetical portions—the supposed producers of the sensible objects—as being beyond all doubt, although insensible objects, the *real things* and the *absolute objects*, so long a desideratum in Physiology, which, according to the other hypothesis above indicated, exist in the intervals of unconsciousness, to supply the place of the sensible objects which are on such occasions entirely withdrawn from existence.

Such then is the way in which our opponents understand the permanence and reality of phenomena—the permanence, externality, and reality of all that we see and feel—a system worth recording, it must be admitted, although they have always shown themselves most unwilling to take the trouble of stating it with the indispensable distinctness as to what they hold to be within, and what they hold to be outside the

skull according to their theories, and as to their substitute for their intermittent objects.

Not to prolong the exposition of their views unnecessarily, I have not here adverted to their substratum-theory, nor even to the producer-theory, beyond its connection with the skull-theory, since both of these have been already discussed elsewhere, and neither of them has much reference to the Sensible object with which alone we are here occupied.

## CHAPTER III.

## OF THAT WHICH CAUSES AND PERCEIVES.

*No physical Causation possible.*

25. All our ideas, sensations, or the things which we perceive, by whatsoever names they may be distinguished, are visibly inactive; there is nothing of power or agency included in them. So that *one idea* or object of thought *cannot produce*, or make *any alteration in another*. To be satisfied of the truth of this, there is nothing else requisite but a bare observation of our ideas. For since they and every part of them exist only in the mind, it follows, that there is nothing in them but what is perceived. But whoever shall attend to his ideas, whether of sense or reflection, will not perceive in them any power or activity; there is therefore no such thing contained in them. A little attention will discover to us that the very being of an idea implies passiveness and inertness in it, insomuch that it is impossible for an idea to do any thing, or, strictly speaking, to be the cause of any thing: neither can it be the resemblance or pattern of any active being, as is evident from Sec. 8. Whence it plainly follows that extension, figure, and motion, cannot be the cause of our sensations. To say, therefore, that these are the effects of powers resulting from the configuration, number, motion, and size of corpuscles, must certainly be false.

Berkeley now treats of Causation; respecting which most important subject however it will not be necessary to detain the reader with so many remarks as on the subject of Phenomena; because on the physical point all scientific men are now agreed; and also because the subject is entirely distinct

from that great doctrine explained in the first portion of the Treatise, and which for the sake of clearness it is desirable to isolate as much as possible from all the other questions of physics or metaphysics that depend upon it, and which have been so often employed to complicate it.

With *a priori* reasoning similar to that with which his doctrine establishes, as one of its immediate corollaries, the Immateriality of the Ego (Sec. 2), Berkeley here points out, in nine clear Sections, that there is no physical Causation and that there are therefore no Causes known except Spirits; it being a fact of nature which we all experience and recognize as what we are all conscious of, that there is, in some true sense, the principle we understand by Causation (although it was for a long time unknown what this true sense was), and there being no other kinds of nature or essence at all known to us except these two, viz. mental things and minds,—Phenomena and Spirits.

It is stated in this Section as a fact of consciousness that no idea can perceive anything nor of itself effect anything, and therefore, as a fact of science, that no material object can do so. Each Spirit knows, at the least, as much about itself as it does about any of its ideas,—being as intimately conscious of itself as it is of them,—and rather more so (a fact overlooked by some distinguished writers),—and is perfectly conscious of itself as being of a nature different from all its ideas, and as being able to originate or consciously cause some things although not others; while, at the same time, it is equally conscious that its ideas cannot know anything nor therefore originate anything. The student here requires to pay close attention to all that in this Treatise comes under the denomination of 'Idea.' To it belong not only the five classes of sensations and the qualities which these sensations delineate, but also our recollection of all such, and the various groups or combinations of all such; which groups constitute our Material Objects. Of all these the spirit can have Ideas; called for distinction, 'mere ideas;' and of these ideas there can be the groups or combinations which we, for instance, call a Poem or a History. But the Spirit can have no idea of another Spirit, i.e. no image or representation of it, in the form of an idea. It only infers the existence of this other Spirit from its actions, and, from these, knows it to be a thing like itself. It is therefore obliged to be to itself, in

some sense, a sort of idea or image of other Spirits; but it is easy to see that to use the word 'idea' in this new sense would only mislead and perplex. We thus have merely a notion or a knowledge of a spirit, not an idea of one: and this remark seems equally to apply to *actions* and other *relations*; of which what the spirit recalls is more truly knowledge than an image (Sec. 142—145). We have therefore only a knowledge or notion of some things, viz., of Spirits; also of actions and relations; but pictures or images, *i.e.*, ideas,—of other things; and these images, for distinction, are here called 'mere ideas.' The ideas of sense, however, (called also sensible qualities or sensible objects), although truly 'ideas,' are not ideas of *anything*, but ideas only in the sense of phenomena or objects immediately present to the mind when it perceives. These Ideas of Sense, or Sense-phenomena, a bright colour for instance, or a heavy weight, or a hard feel, or a shrill noise, are not images and representations. They are original or ultimate things in nature. These then and all such things being thus seen to be ideas of various kinds, we have no difficulty in seeing that it is no use to look for action or origination in any of them. In this way after a century and a-half of the most rambling and the most circuitous reasoning imaginable, the conclusion arrived at *a priori* by Berkeley in a single page is now fully recognized by all our most advanced thinkers:—*there is no Physical Causation possible*. What has hitherto been mistaken for it was merely the *figurative* or secondary Causation.

*Spirit the only possible Cause known.*

26. We perceive a continual succession of ideas, some are anew excited, others are changed or totally disappear. There is therefore some cause of these ideas whereon they depend, and which produces and changes them. That this cause cannot be any quality or idea or combination of ideas, is clear from the preceding Section. It must therefore be a substance; but it has been shown that there is no corporeal or material substance: it remains therefore that the *cause of ideas* is an incorporeal active substance or spirit.

['No corporeal or material substance,' *i.e.* except the one consisting of sensible qualities or ideas of sense, and which of course exists through the mind, or, as we commonly say, within the mind.]

In the last Analysis possible of all our knowledge we find ourselves reduced to two elements only,—Phenomena and Spirits. We know the exact nature of these two, and we know the exact nature of no other. In fact we have not the least materials for knowledge respecting any other; and this simplification of the elements is an enormous advantage for the progress of all scientific research. We know that as far as our discernment goes, there may be many natures unknown to us; we know that just in the same way as there may be more sensations than the five we know of, although we cannot even imagine one other different from these, so also there may be other natures,—nay, we are conscious there is one—beside these two; but any such nature or natures are, as also we know *a priori*, entirely unadapted to our faculties of discernment; so entirely so, that, with the exception of this one, we cannot even judge whether others exist or not; and of that one we only know that it is *toto cælo* different from the natures that we know. We thus only know these two natures. Then we see changes connected with phenomena, and we are conscious that there cannot be change of any kind without a Cause; but in phenomena we see, at the same time, this utter incapacity for original action. We are thus reduced to spirit-action as the sole action known to us that could be the origin of the changes of all kinds which we see going on around us either in the Material Universe or in human affairs; this origination being also what each spirit is conscious of in the changes resulting from its own choice and action.

Whether we call the Spirit a substance or not can be of little consequence now, since the word in Metaphysics has no longer any signification. Berkeley sometimes, as here, speaks of it as a 'substance;' sometimes, as in the next section, he speaks of it as not being a substance. All that is necessary to remember upon this point, is that the only corporeal substance we know of is sensible and consists wholly of ideas, *i.e.*, of sensible or material qualities, neither perceiving nor originating anything; and that the only incorporeal substance we know of perceives and originates, *i.e.*, prefers and chooses, but is insensible as well as unextended, and is wholly exempt from

constituent elements; the two 'substances' thus differing in each particular from one another.

*What the Spirit knows of itself.*

27. A Spirit is one simple, undivided, active being: as it perceives ideas, it is called the *understanding*, and as it produces or otherwise operates about them, it is called the *will*. Hence there can be no idea formed of a soul or spirit: for all ideas whatever, being passive and inert (vide Sec. 25), they cannot represent unto us, by way of image or *likeness*, that which acts. A little attention will make it plain to any one, that to have an idea which shall be like that active principle of motion and change of ideas, is absolutely impossible. Such is the nature of *spirit*, or that which acts, that it cannot be of itself perceived *but only by the effects which it produceth*. If any man shall doubt of the truth of what is here delivered, let him but reflect and try if he can frame the idea of any power or active being; and whether he hath ideas of two principal powers, marked by the names *will* and *understanding*, distinct from each other as well as from a third idea of substance or being in general, with a relative notion of its supporting or being the subject of the aforesaid powers, which is signified by the name *soul* or *spirit*. This is what some hold; but, so far as I can see, the words *will*, *soul*, *spirit*, do not stand for different ideas, or, in truth, for any idea at all, but for something which is very different from ideas, and which, being an agent, cannot be like unto, or represented by, any idea whatsoever. Though it must be owned at the same time, that we have some notion of soul, spirit, and the operations of the mind, such as willing, loving, hating, inasmuch as we know or understand the meaning of those words.

The Spirit is that unextended invisible nature or essence which is conscious of itself as well as of its phenomena, but is immediately perceived by nothing but itself. We generally define it for the sake of brevity as that which perceives, but

this is an insufficient definition. Its Essence is not only to perceive what is presented to it. By its essence and nature it not only perceives what is presented to it, but it instinctively *seeks, desires, endeavours* to perceive the *truth* of things. Here then we have not only an Understanding but a Will,—not only Perceptions, but Volitions. It is evident then how incomplete the other definition is.

The Spirit can further be defined as a centre of faculties, if you like so to express it. It is not, however, something in that centre. It is not a substance with which various powers, distinct from itself, are in some unintelligible way connected; nor is it a substance consisting of ideas and knowledge, which are supposed to perceive and think when they get together in this way. We deny that knowledge knows anything, or that ideas can perceive each other. We are even astonished to find statements of this kind still current in England under the name of Metaphysics.

To the foregoing definition of spirit we may add what Berkeley has further written in *The Dialogues*: ‘I know or am conscious of my own being, and that I myself am not my ideas, but somewhat else,—a thinking, active principle that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas. I know that I,—one and the same self,—perceive both colours and sounds, that a colour cannot perceive a sound, nor a sound a colour;—that I am therefore one individual principle distinct from colour and sound, and for the same reason from all other sensible things and inert ideas.’ The reader will also find a large amount of useful suggestion on the Spirit-nature in the latter portion of the present Treatise (from section 135 to the end) whether we think of this nature as the *maintainer* of things which could not subsist without it, as of ideas for instance; or as alone *unchanged* amidst all the changes which are being undergone by its phenomena, effected either by itself or other spirits. In either of these senses it is evidently the Ego-nature alone which, in our hemisphere of being, is entitled to this disputed rank of ‘substance’ (*substans*).

### *Of Causation and a Cause.*

28. I find I can excite ideas in my mind at pleasure, and



vary and shift the scene as oft as I think fit. It is no more than willing, and straightway this or that idea arises in my fancy: and by the same power it is obliterated, and makes way for another. This making and unmaking of ideas doth very properly denominate the mind active. This much is certain, and grounded on experience; but when we talk of unthinking agents, or of exciting ideas exclusive of volition, we only amuse ourselves with words.

29. But whatever power I may have over *my own* thoughts, I find the ideas actually perceived by sense have not a like dependence on my will. When in broad day-light I open my eyes, it is not in my power to choose whether I shall see or no, or to determine what particular objects shall present themselves to my view; and so likewise as to the hearing and other senses, the ideas imprinted on them are not creatures of my will. There is *therefore some other will or Spirit that produces them.*

Berkeley here merely states, what in these days, it is true, needs nothing but the merest statement, that there can be no action without volition, and that from the characteristics of the action we infer those of the agent. But the great difficulty of vanquishing existing prejudices, and especially the necessity of anticipating and counteracting for the next generation the influence of a prejudice still existing in the present, make it desirable to append here the following suggestions, and to add the facts of nature and consciousness connected with them.

When our more distinguished philosophers shook off their theory of Physical Causation, they not unnaturally carried some of its blunders into their new convictions. They got, indeed, at last to recognize clearly that it is the spirit alone of the two natures known to us, that can by any possibility be the true cause of anything; but as in the theory of Physical Causation, they supposed the material object to have in it some magical force or power, wherewith *it was able* to produce the result, so they transferred this 'force' or 'power' to their new system, and began this new system at once with the notion that there really is in nature this sort of thing called 'force' (which we see so clearly there is not), and that this 'force,' as

involved in Causation, lies *bonâ fide* in the spiritual substance, that this spiritual or immaterial nature has in it, essentially inherent in it, the 'force' or 'power,' as we call it, which we think we see exerted in the production of the effects. Of course this sort of nonsense could not be easily got rid of where big books took the place of a *priori* principles, and even now when we are no longer 'hammering away' at this latent 'force' in matter (although some echoes of the hammer are still being heard) we are labouring hard to imagine something of the kind in Spirit, and we strain ourselves to imagine that, in the Percipient or Spirit nature, there is innate and inherent a 'force,' very much like the old 'physical force,' which it puts forth to produce such effects as it desires to produce, and which even *necessarily* produces them.

This is now the blunder which still lingers in the field of Causation, and which Berkeley's discovery is admirably calculated to remove. The Ego or Spirit-nature has no such 'force' or 'power' in it. It is conscious that it has not. It has no other power in it than its own nature, viz., to choose, to prefer, and to intend. But that is an immense and unconsidered Power. The special work of the Spirit in Causation is *to choose*. All the 'force' subsequently necessary is supplied to the Spirit-nature. That nature itself has not this. Nothing can be more conscious of anything than the human Spirit is that it is not it which has the 'power' or 'force' employed in carrying out its volitions. It is conscious that it has no more the power in itself to lift a straw than to place a planet; and even has a strong suspicion or clear conviction, according to the amount of reflection which it has bestowed upon the subject, that there is not anywhere, not even in the Supreme Cause, the sort of thing which we all of us here understand by a 'force' or 'power.' The obvious conclusion at all events is either that no such force is wanted or exists at all in nature; or that, if it does, it is supplied from some other quarter distinct from the Human Spirit.

To be the cause of anything is consciously to combine all the conditions which the laws of nature render necessary for the production of the result; to do this consciously, for otherwise nothing does it; and to do it intentionally for that express purpose, for an 'unintending Cause,' however otherwise

conscious, is no Cause at all. Here then we have the whole import of Berkeley's words in the text: 'When we talk of Agents exclusive of Volition, we only amuse ourselves with words.' Such an Agent is a physical impossibility. He could not move a finger without a volition; but to do this, he requires nothing but the volition and his liberty. He requires no '*force*' whatever.

Each Spirit is conscious of all this action and causation in itself; and infers the same action and the same volitions in other Spirits from the external results in the case of other Spirits. These external results constitute all the evidence that we have of these other Spirits; and even have the effect of leading spirits almost to think of the bodies of other spirits (the ideas of sense by means of which all spirits inter-communicate) as if they were themselves the very beings whose actions and volitions these bodies represent; which is likewise the origin of that foolish Materialism that leads some unreflecting minds to imagine that the sign is the thing signified and that the agent's instrument is the agent, not only with regard to persons in daily life, but also with regard to the Supreme Spirit. We not only habitually think that our fellow-creatures, and indeed ourselves also, are bodies, instead of spirits, but many of us quite as sincerely believe that the Material Universe is able to act like a spirit, instead of merely representing, as it does, the volitions of one.

It is worth while here to advert to a point which many writers leave unnoticed and many others endeavour to obscure; viz., that our choice is free within certain limits; that whatever is Supreme in nature has expressly not given us an unlimited liberty of action, but only this liberty within certain limits; and that by freedom, choice, and will, in the case of man, (even if in any case such a thing were possible) we never mean unlimited liberty. We have the option, for instance, of opening our eyes or not; but there our liberty ceases. If we open them we are compelled to see what is before us; if we do not open them we are compelled not to see it. The freedom then in question here is pretty equally shared between two agents the Supreme Cause and Man. The Supreme Cause has its half and we have ours. This principle runs through the whole of human conduct. It runs through the whole of the superhuman conduct also in its relations with us. The superhuman volitions, which, for the sake of the human understanding, are

limited to the laws of nature, leave thus a large field of action to the volitions of mankind; but as clearly as the action of our human body shows itself to be a Spirit-action the action of the Universe shows itself to be this also, not only by what the Spirit of the Universe does, but almost still more clearly by what it does not do,—by what it leaves out, exempt from law in order to constitute this field of human action. For let it be remembered that it is change alone that attests the action of the Spirit. The magnitude of the effect does not attest this; nor does the mere medium do so through whose changes the volitions are expressed. The magnitude, and indeed quite as much the minuteness of the operations, only show that the amount of liberty available exceeds that available for man to an extent beyond anything that we can see the limits of; we see, as we might expect, that in no respect has this superhuman liberty any other limit discernible for us than that prescribed by the requirements of the human understanding; in other words by the fact that the Material Universe is within our understandings, within our minds,—made expressly for our minds and faculties,—nay, is, for its own nature, dependent upon ours,—and is manifestly existing for the intercommunication of mind with mind, not only of the Supreme Mind with our human Minds, but of our human Minds with one another.

That all change then implies Causation in its true unfigurative sense is for the Metaphysician an *a priori* fact or principle. That Spirit is the only original or ultimate Cause whose nature we know and experience, or can even imagine, is also for us one of these *a priori* principles. Another is that there can be no unconscious, unselecting, unintending Originator or Cause of anything. But of the changes to be accounted for, we have two very different classes;—some which the human Spirit can easily connect with its own volitions;—some which it cannot so connect. For these latter therefore it has recourse to the Absolute. The Absolute, in its action (which resembles that of human spirits), produces those changes which the human spirit is conscious that it does not itself produce; but which the human spirit nevertheless discerns to be the work of some Nature or Being invested, either arbitrarily or necessarily with mental faculties similar to its own, such, for instance, as *choosing and intending*—therefore also *knowing and comparing*; but so far superior to its own, and so manifestly combined

with other faculties entirely different from mere mental ones, that we can no longer think of the nature developing these faculties as a mere spirit, and can only speak of it as spiritual or immaterial, because we are ignorant, necessarily ignorant, of any nearer approach to the definition of that nature.

This nature of the Absolute is a subject of vast importance upon which scarcely a word has ever been written; a subject of which Berkeley found it unnecessary to treat in the exposition of his doctrine, but on which this Analysis of Causation invites a few remarks. There is, as I have just said, a modification in the use of the word 'spirit' when applied to the Supreme Cause which is entitled to the closest attention, and all the more so because, as I have also just remarked, it has scarcely ever obtained any. It is this:

That the origin or cause of Phenomena and Spirits is neither phenomenon nor spirit we see *à priori*, as well as that there is this Supreme Cause of both; for no nature can produce itself, and there can be no change without a cause. The Supreme Cause, therefore, or Absolute has a distinct nature, entirely unknown to us, because entirely and essentially different from all that is known to us. This great fact nothing we have here to say can shake or in the smallest degree controvert. We find however, that this utterly unknown Absolute manifests itself to us as a Spirit,—almost I may say, as one of ourselves,—as a Spirit in relation with other Spirits,—engaged in the various actions of a spirit, in such actions, therefore, as these other spirits can understand; and so we call also this immaterial but unknown nature a spirit-nature, the Supreme Spirit or Supreme Cause. The metaphysician, however, knows that the nature in question is as far beyond the nature of a spirit, as a spirit is in its nature beyond a phenomenon.

There can be little doubt that it is this existence of the Absolute upon which our more enlightened opponents have been unconsciously endeavouring to insist under the absurd name of insensible or immaterial matter, beyond and outside the sensible Universe. But no excuse can here be found for such an opposition on the part of enlightened men. We cannot call that nature 'matter' or a 'material substance' which has itself produced the material nature, and which, as all here admit, has not in it a single quality or attribute of matter. Even upon their own showing then, the Absolute is strictly as

immaterial as a spirit is: and since its actions are those of a spirit, it is more natural and intelligible to speak of that Supreme but Unknown Nature as a spirit,—a spirit being the only immaterial nature known to us, or even, from our nature, knowable. But, although we have no other name indicative of this spiritual action, and immaterial essence, by which to designate the Supreme Cause, yet the metaphysician, I repeat, knows that the Absolute, being the cause of spirit, cannot be a mere spirit, and that it is *for the sake of* the Spirits which it has created, and in order that they should be able to understand its action, that it acts as one, and represents its otherwise unintelligible nature to our human understandings as itself also an Understanding; in our intercourse with which we may expect to experience all that we should in our intercourse with a spirit like our own, unlike ours, however, in being entirely devoid of the imperfections which we find in ours. For the scientific this is important knowledge, although not for those whose knowledge is taken from the convictions or report of others. We here learn *a priori* that in the administrator of our lives we have to deal with a spirit of the highest order. That is all we require to know. That is all that is necessary to give us the confidence that we require.

### *Of the Laws of Nature.*

30. The ideas of sense are more strong, lively, and *distinct* than those of the imagination; they have likewise a steadiness, order, and coherence, and are not excited at random, as those which are the effects of human wills often are, but in a regular train or series, the admirable connection whereof sufficiently testifies the wisdom and benevolence of its author. Now *the set rules or established methods, wherein the mind we depend on excites in us the ideas of sense, are called the laws of nature*; and these we learn by experience, which teaches us that such and such ideas are attended with such and such other ideas, in the ordinary course of things.

31. This gives us a sort of foresight, which enables us to regulate our actions for the benefit of life. And without

this we should be eternally at a loss : we could not know how to act anything that might procure us the least pleasure, or remove the least pain of sense. That food nourishes, sleep refreshes, and fire warms us ; that to sow in the seed-time is the way to reap in the harvest, and, in general, that to obtain such or such ends, such or such means are conducive, all this we know, *not by discovering any necessary connection between our ideas*, but only by the observation of the settled laws of nature, without which we should be all in uncertainty and confusion, and a grown man no more know how to manage himself in the affairs of life than an infant just born.

The 'mere idea' (as we call it) which we have of an 'Idea of Sense,' or Sense-phenomenon,—of a feel, for instance, or a sound,—is something very different from the idea of sense itself,—so different that the one is called the real thing and the other the mere idea of it, resembling one another only in the fact that they are both mental things, both phenomena. The one is only the recollection or imagination of the other,—the image of it formed in recollecting or imagining its details. 'The laws of nature' is a phrase usually applied to that regularity of succession or concomitance with which we find that the ideas of sense or sensible objects are presented to the spirit world ; and although it is true that these laws apply also to our 'mere ideas,' the ideas that we have of these 'ideas of sense,' yet it is especially in their application to the 'ideas of sense' or sense-phenomena (sense-objects) that they are here spoken of ; and there is no longer any question either as to their existence in nature, or as to what they are ; nor even much as to the necessity of a discerning and intending cause of them. For unenlightened minds, however, these Laws of Nature exclude, as it were, all necessity for a Supreme Cause or Absolute, and suggest the notion that these laws alone can manage everything, or that other notion, already adverted to as so groundless and frivolous, that each phenomenon or idea has in itself the power not only of originating its own action, but also of obliging all the rest to act in concert with it ; yet what can be clearer than it is, that to be able to do anything we must be able to intend it, and to know that we are doing it ?

What we do without knowing it and without intending it, we clearly do not do at all.

But, as already remarked, the theory of physical causation is now exploded, and all scientific men, or, at least, almost all of them, now fully recognize that what they have to seek and study and deal with are laws, not forces. All also recognize fully that the laws of phenomenal nature could not have been innate in the phenomena, nor have been devised by them, nor could even have devised themselves. Those who think at all upon this subject naturally attribute the institution of these laws to the same source as they attribute the phenomena themselves, viz., to the spiritual action of the immaterial Absolute; and as to the advantage of nature's laws, to which Berkeley adverts, and the care of the Absolute therein shown, not only is that true and obvious, but it seems not easy to imagine how either the Will or the Understanding could completely operate without them.

• *Figurative or secondary Causation.*

32. And yet *this consistent uniform working*, which so evidently displays the goodness and wisdom of that governing Spirit whose will constitutes the law of nature, is so far from leading our thoughts to him, that it rather *sends them a-wandering after second causes*. For when we perceive certain ideas of sense constantly followed by other ideas, and *we know this is not of our own doing*, we forthwith attribute power and agency to the ideas themselves, and make one the cause of another, than which nothing can be more absurd and unintelligible. Thus, for example, having observed that when we perceive by sight a certain round luminous figure, we at the same time perceive by touch the idea of sensation called *heat*, we do from thence conclude the sun to be the cause of heat. And in like manner, perceiving the motion and collision of bodies to be attended with sound, we are inclined to think the latter an effect of the former.

He here adverts to the absurdity which his doctrine so clearly points out as lurking in the vulgar hypothesis which



considers such inert, unconscious things as the objects of sense (sense-phenomena, or ideas of sense) to be the *original sources* of such other things as either follow or accompany them,—an hypothesis which, under the pretext of being only a metaphor and treating only of secondary causes, was really for some time bringing about a great deal of misconception, and prolonging the confusion of Physical Causation. Nor must we forget, although Berkeley here omits it, the other equally preposterous hypothesis still lingering among us, and constantly interchanged with this, to the effect that there is an immaterial something, of some unknown kind, *wrapped up* in every group of sensible qualities, and supposed by some of our opponents to be the true object, or, at least, the true originator, not only of the whole sensible object, but even of all the effects and actions which we attribute to this object. These opponents, never very numerous, have almost entirely passed over to those who consider each object's invisible 'something' to be outside the whole sensible Universe, instead of its being wrapped up in sensible qualities in any part of this Universe. They now see that this old notion would place this 'something' within the mind; which would not at all suit them.

*Of the Real and the Unreal in the Product.*

33. The ideas imprinted on the senses by the author of nature are called *real things*: and those excited in the imagination, being less regular, vivid, and constant, are more properly termed *ideas* or *images of things*, which they copy and represent. But then our sensations, be they never so vivid and distinct, are nevertheless *ideas*, that is, they exist in the mind, or are perceived by it, as truly as the ideas of its own framing. The ideas of sense are allowed to have more reality in them, that is, to be more *strong*, *orderly*, and *coherent* than the creatures of the mind: but this is no argument that they exist without the mind. They are also *less dependent on the spirit*, or thinking substance which perceives them, in that they are excited by the will of another and more powerful spirit: yet still they are

*ideas*, and certainly no *idea*, whether faint or strong, can exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving it.

['Ideas imprinted on the senses.' This old-fashioned expression, found also in the first section, only means 'sensible objects' or 'ideas of sense.' It is not intended to mean that there is anything imprinted on the organs of sense; and 'imprinted' on the sentient spirit only means 'presented' to it.] \*

Berkeley terminates this First Part of his Treatise by again speaking here, as often elsewhere (see Secs. 36 and 41), of the wide difference that exists between sensible objects and the 'mere ideas' which a spirit has of these;—in other words, between 'real things,' or the 'ideas of sense,' and those comparatively unreal things, or 'mere ideas,' which are only insensible images or representations of the real things, taking the place of these in the immediate action of the spirit when it thinks. He has been obliged to dwell the more upon this very obvious difference, not only on account of his use of the word 'idea' in the exposition of his doctrine, whereby his opponents have had a pretext for representing him as holding pain to be a 'mere idea,' and the material Universe a 'mere idea,' and even a 'mere idea;' but also because his opponents themselves do, strange to say, utterly deny the reality and sufficiency of those sensible qualities and their groups,—those sense-phenomena or ideas of sense,—which we, with all the rest of the world, maintain are here the only realities—the only real things; and whose reality and sufficiency they are thus compelled to deny, in order to justify with the greater plausibility their strange hypothesis of an 'immaterial matter' (a matter completely free from all material qualities), supposed to be combined with these groups, which are, they say, when without it, unreal things and mere ideas. The whole question, however, of reality and non-reality presents no difficulty whatever in our doctrine, although so much in this fantastic one of our opponents. Even by their own account, it is impossible to say what in their doctrine is real and what is not. No one, however, will pretend that the 'immaterial matter' of these few theorists (who represent it as 'the summit of human wisdom' not to deny its existence) could add much to the reality of any-

thing, much less then to the reality of an Armstong gun or of our granite.

An important point in this Section is that alluded to, in its first and last passage, where we are reminded that even stones are Ideas, and as such, the products and objects of some Spirit-action beyond ours. See p. 31, *et seqq.*

END OF PART I.

THE  
PRINCIPLES  
OF  
HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

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PART II.

FOURTEEN ALLEGED OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE. WITH  
BERKELEY'S REPLY TO EACH.



## CHAPTER I.

### TWELVE OBJECTIONS.—ON THE GROUND OF THEISM, SCIENCE, AND COMMON SENSE.

*First Objection: That we deny Insensible Matter.*

34. Before we proceed any further, it is necessary to spend some time in answering objections which may probably be made against the principles hitherto laid down. In doing of which, if I seem too prolix to those of quick apprehensions, I hope it may be pardoned, since all men do not equally apprehend things of this nature; and I am willing to be understood by every one. *First*, then, it will be objected that by the foregoing principles, *all that is real and substantial in nature is banished out of the world*: and instead thereof a chimerical scheme of ideas takes place. All things that exist, exist only in the mind—that is, they are purely notional. What, therefore, becomes of the sun, moon, and stars? What must we think of houses, rivers, mountains, trees, stones—nay, even of our own bodies? Are all these but so many chimeras and illusions on the fancy? To all which, and whatever else of the same sort may be objected, I answer, that by the principles premised, we are not deprived of any one thing in nature. Whatever we see, feel, hear, or anywise conceive or understand, remains as secure as ever, and is as real as ever. There is a *rerum natura*, and the distinction between realities and chimeras retains its full force. This is evident from Secs. 22, 30, and 33, where we have shown what is meant by *real things* in opposition to *chimeras*, or ideas of our own framing; but then they both equally exist in the mind, and in that sense are alike *ideas*.

35. I do not argue against the existence of any one thing that we can apprehend, either by sense or reflection. That the things I see with mine eyes and touch with my hands do exist, really exist, I make not the least question. The only thing whose existence we deny, is *that which philosophers call matter* or corporeal substance. And in doing of this, there is no damage done to the rest of mankind, who, I dare say, will never miss it. The atheist indeed will want the colour of an empty name to support his impiety; and the philosophers may possibly find, they have lost a great handle for trifling and disputation.

• 36. If any man thinks this detracts from the existence or reality of things, he is very far from understanding what hath been premised in the plainest terms I could think of. Take here an abstract of what has been said. There are spiritual substances, minds, or human souls, which will or excite ideas in themselves at pleasure: but these are faint, weak, and unsteady in respect of others they perceive by sense, which, being impressed upon them according to certain rules or laws of nature, speak themselves the effects of a mind more powerful and wise than human spirits. These latter are said to have more *reality* in them than the former: by which is meant that they are more affecting, orderly, and distinct, and that they are not fictions of the mind perceiving them. And in this sense, the sun that I see by day is the real sun, and that which I imagine by night is the idea of the former. In the sense here given of *reality*, it is evident that every vegetable, star, mineral, and in general each part of the mundane system, is as much a *real being* by our principles as by any other. Whether others mean anything by the term *reality* different from what I do, I entreat them to look into their own thoughts and see.

37. It will be urged that thus much at least is true, to wit, that we take away all corporeal substances. To this my answer is, that if the word *substance* be taken in the vulgar sense, for a combination of sensible qualities, such as extension, solidity, weight, and the like: this we cannot be

accused of taking away. But if it be taken in a philosophic sense, for the *support of accidents or qualities without the mind*; then indeed I acknowledge that we take it away, if one may be said to take away that which never had any existence, not even in the imagination.

38. But, say you, it sounds very harsh to say we eat and drink ideas, and are clothed with ideas. I acknowledge it does so, the word *idea* not being used in common discourse to signify the several combinations of sensible qualities, which are called *things*: and it is certain that any expression which varies from the familiar use of language, will seem harsh and ridiculous. But this doth not concern the truth of the proposition, which in other words is no more than to say, we are fed and clothed with those things which we perceive immediately by our senses. The hardness or softness, the colour, taste, warmth, figure, and such like qualities, which combined together constitute the several sorts of victuals and apparel, have been shown to exist only in the mind that perceives them; and this is all that is meant by calling them *ideas*; which word, if it was as ordinarily used as *thing*, would sound no harsher nor more ridiculous than it. I am not for disputing about the propriety, but the truth of the expression. If therefore you agree with me that we eat, and drink, and are clad with the immediate objects of sense, which cannot exist unperceived or without the mind; I shall readily grant it is more proper or conformable to custom, that they should be called things rather than ideas.

39. If it be demanded why I make use of the word *idea*, and do not rather in compliance with custom call them *things*, I answer, I do it for two reasons: first, because the term *thing*, in contradistinction to *idea*, is generally supposed to denote somewhat existing without the mind: secondly, because *thing* hath a more comprehensive signification than *idea*, including *spirits*, or thinking things, as well as *ideas*. Since therefore the objects of sense exist only in the mind, and are withal thoughtless and inactive, I



chose to mark them by the word *idea*, which implies those properties.

40. But, say what we can, some one perhaps may be apt to reply, he will still believe his senses, and never suffer any arguments, how plausible soever, to prevail over the certainty of them. Be it so, assert the evidence of sense as high as you please, we are willing to do the same. That what I see, hear, and feel *doth exist*, *that is to say, is perceived by me*, I no more doubt than I do of my own being. But I do not see how the testimony of sense can be alleged as a proof for the existence of any thing which is not perceived by sense. We are not for having any man turn *sceptic*, and disbelieve his senses; on the contrary, we give them all the stress and assurance imaginable; nor are there any principles more opposite to scepticism than those we have laid down, as shall be hereafter clearly shown.

Here follow in fifty Sections the twelve principal objections supposed by our opponents, either on scientific or theological grounds,—indeed also on grounds of Common Sense,—to lie against the doctrine that a Material Substance is a Phenomenon;—with two further objections to it which have been raised in a special manner by the so-called ‘Christians’ of Berkeley’s time; and by them supposed to be important, with Berkeley’s separate reply to each of the fourteen objections. But of all these objections, there are only four (the 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 12th) the discussion of which is at all calculated to be of use to the student, the rest of them being what any one can himself reply to who understands the preceding portion of the treatise, and what may only confuse or mislead any one who does not.

The first of these fourteen objections is, that according to our doctrine, there is nothing real in material nature except sensible qualities with their groups and the laws to which these groups are subject; whereas these qualities and their groups (say our opponents here) have no reality whatever; and are precisely that in material nature which has no real existence, being wholly, they think, lodged within our skulls,

in as far as they exist at all, and only appearing illusively to be outside them.

There is nothing real, say these writers, in a block of granite but what is invisible and otherwise insensible in the block,—nothing but what there can be supposed to be, in it, entirely devoid of all sensible qualities. This invisible intactual element, wholly without weight or hardness and as free from shape or size as a mathematical point, is said by our adversaries to be the only real thing in the whole block of granite! Is this, we ask, common sense? When we speak of granite as matter and as a material substance we mean, and everybody means (except these half dozen modern ‘philosophers’) a solid, heavy, shaped, hard, and extended mass, and no one of sane mind denies the reality and existence of such an object. But we are told by our opponents that in this merely sensible mass there is no reality, that there is no reality in a group of sensible qualities, that in short they do not even exist as an object outside us where they seem to us to exist, but merely within the precincts of our own skulls; that the real block of granite is something quite different from a group or congeries of sensible qualities; something neither solid nor extended nor shaped nor coloured, which something, moreover, is quite separated from the sensible qualities of the block, being, they say, outside our skulls, and even really in the very spot outside us where these sensible qualities illusively appear to us to be. This was the invisible matter or insensible corporeal substance of the learned in Berkeley’s time which he declared to be absurd, and which has hitherto led to so much frivolous struggling on the part of our physicists, to decipher the reasonableness of what he can have meant. What are we to think of a metaphysical age in which we are still said to be banishing all reality from nature, when we hold up to ridicule this preposterous theory of insensible matter?—a kind of matter without any material qualities? Berkeley seems here to recognize that the use of the equivocal term ‘idea’ by the metaphysicians of his time, and by himself in conformity with their practice, has created much of the difficulty experienced in the exposition and understanding of this subject. Of that there can be no doubt; and this is proved by the persistence with which our adversaries, intentionally and most sedulously, persevere in this equivocation. Nevertheless that one Material

Substance should eat another or wear another Material Substance, is quite as curious a thing in its way, as that one idea should eat another or wear another.

*Second Objection : That we deny all difference between a Sensation and our Recollection of it.*

41. Secondly, it will be *objected* that there is a great difference betwixt real fire, for instance, and the idea of fire, betwixt dreaming or imagining one's self burnt, and actually being so : this and the like may be urged in opposition to our tenets. To all which the *answer* is evident from what hath been already said, and I shall only add in this place, that if real fire be very different from the idea of fire, so also is the real pain that it occasions, very different from the idea of the same pain : and yet nobody will pretend that real pain either is, or can possibly be, in an unperceiving thing or without the mind, any more than its idea.

The second objection is that, according to our doctrine, there is no difference between the idea of sense (i.e., the sensible object or sense-phenomena) and the mere recollection that we have of this idea of sense, since they are both ideas. The answer is that this is pure misconception. No difference can be more complete than that made by Berkeley between these things,—between a sensation and our recollection of it. Although every scientific man knows that they are both ideas, every scientific man knows also that they are not, both of them, ideas of sense. Everybody knows that there is the whole difference of black and white between an idea of sense and the idea which is not an idea of sense,—between music as we hear it and music as we remember it,—between pain as we feel it and pain as we remember it. All admit, however, i.e., all who understand scientific terms, both that the music itself is an idea or phenomenon in this metaphysical sense, and that the recollection of it is one also. Black and white are very different things, although both of them are colours ; and the air is very different from granite, although both of them are matter.

Here as elsewhere it is our opponents who really make the denial they impute to us. It is they who really deny this difference, and who say that there is as completely no reality

in our Sensations and their Qualities, *i.e.* in our ideas of sense (in the sensible qualities of granite for instance) as in our 'mere ideas' of such things, when we remember them or imagine them. Their denying this wide difference themselves seems to be very much that which makes many of them so persistently misunderstand us, and misrepresent us upon this point, to those unacquainted with the subject.

*Third Objection : That denying Insensible Matter, we suppose nothing external to our Heads.*

42. Thirdly, it will be objected that we see things actually without or at a distance from us, and which consequently do not exist in the mind, it being absurd that those things which are seen at the distance of several miles, should be as near to us as our own thoughts. In answer to this, I desire it may be considered, that in a *dream* we do oft perceive things as existing at a great distance off, and yet for all that, those things are acknowledged to have their existence only in the mind.

43. But for the fuller clearing of this point, it may be worth while to consider, how it is that we perceive distance and things placed at a distance by sight. For that we should in truth see *external* space, and bodies actually existing in it, some nearer, others further off, seems to carry with it some opposition to what hath been said, of their existing nowhere without the mind. The consideration of this difficulty it was that gave birth to my Essay towards a new Theory of Vision, which was published not long since. Wherein it is shown that *distance* or outness is *neither immediately* of itself *perceived* by sight, nor yet apprehended or judged of by lines and angles, or any thing that hath a necessary connection with it: but that it is *only suggested* to our thoughts, by certain visible ideas and sensations attending vision, which in their own nature have no manner of similitude or relation, either with distance, or things placed at a distance. But by a connection taught us *by experience*, they come to signify and suggest them to us, after the same manner that *words* of any language suggest the ideas they

are made to stand for. Insomuch that a man born blind, and afterwards made to see, would not, at first sight, think the things he saw to be without his mind, or at any distance from him. See Sect. 41 of the forementioned treatise.

44. The ideas of sight and touch make two species, entirely distinct and heterogeneous. *The former are marks and prognostics of the latter.* That the proper objects of sight neither exist without the mind, nor are the images of external things, was shown even in that treatise. Though throughout the same, the contrary be supposed true of tangible objects: not that to suppose that vulgar error was necessary for establishing the notions therein laid down, but because it was beside my purpose to examine and refute it in a discourse concerning *vision*. So that in strict truth the ideas of sight, when we apprehend by them distance and things placed at a distance, do not suggest or mark out to us things *actually* existing at a distance, but only admonish us what ideas of touch will be imprinted in our minds at such and such distances of time, and in consequence of such or such actions. It is, I say, evident from what has been said in the foregoing parts of this treatise, and in Sec. 147, and elsewhere of the essay concerning vision, that visible ideas are language whereby the governing Spirit on whom we depend, informs us what tangible ideas he is about to imprint upon us, in case we excite this or that motion in our own bodies. But for a fuller information in this point, I refer to the essay itself.

Here is raised what may be called the Skull theory of our opponents. It is the third objection in the list, and is as follows:—Our opponents, with few exceptions, hold that the perceiving power is within the skull, in the nerves of the brain; and that, since everything perceived, under the condition of the senses, exists as a sense-perception or sense-phenomenon (an idea of sense) all such phenomena must, on this account, have their place in the very spot where the perceiving power itself is;—i.e., inside the skull.

Here, however, these enlightened thinkers, of course, immediately experience the formidable difficulty of having to explain

how it is possible for all the vast sizes and distances of nature to co-exist in this manner, within the skull. They explain this as one might expect, by supposing material Nature divided into the known and the unknown,—into two totally different parts, the sensible material Nature, and the insensible material Nature. As the whole sensible or sensuous, and visible Universe, say they, exists thus necessarily with all its sense-magnitudes within the area of the skull, it becomes necessary for us to infer that outside our skulls at the same time, there must be another Universe, from its nature as well as from its position, intactual and invisible, and in all other respects insensible; in which Universe exempt from all sensible qualities, all these vast sizes and distances of which we are conscious, may be imagined to exist in some insensible manner, but really and unillusively; which insensible condition of things is alone therefore to be regarded as the real one, the real Universe, outside the cerebral or sensible one, although it is the one so strenuously denied by Berkeley, and which seemed to him so entirely unnecessary as well as in itself so utterly self-contradictory.\* It is absurd, these people say, to suppose that the sense-phenomena, which are things so manifestly within our little skulls, can be really of such sizes and at such vast distances from one another, and even from our heads, as they thus curiously seem to us to be. The real sizes and distances, shapes and movements, are, say they, those to which anything like sense is from their nature not adapted, in other words, those which are as insensible as thought, outside all mind moreover and all possibility of knowledge. Our sensations and the qualities delineated by our sensations, also our thoughts about all such things, are, they think, inside our skulls, therefore, not real, and thus when we deny these supposed magnitudes, invisible and unknown, outside our skulls, we deny, they tell us, the reality of all magnitudes; for according to them there really are no other.

The obvious answer to this objection of our opponents is that the sense-phenomena do not exist or have their place within the skull;—that the skull and the brain are themselves sense-phenomena like all other physical objects; that they cannot, therefore, have sense-perceptions; that no phenomenon can perceive another, or, from its nature, know anything; that no percipient nature can be located *within* its own ideas

or sense-phenomena, however much its action may be so localized; not being in point of fact, capable of occupying space at all; that all the distances and sizes, and shapes and colours of each group are, therefore, outside the group called the skull, and outside the group called the brain, just as we *see* them or *feel* them to be outside these two phenomenal groups, at vast and various distances from them; and that all sensible objects,—all hard and heavy ideas of sense or sense-phenomena, are as completely outside and separated from the skull and brain as they are outside and separated from one another.

Why,—we naturally ask of our eccentric opponents,—why is it necessary to suppose our Sensations and their Qualities to be lodged within our heads? This was, perhaps, foolish enough while we thought, as people did some two centuries ago, that the colour which we see *outside* the colours of our head, produced a sensation and other qualities inside the colours of our head; but now that we know the colour seen outside the skull to be itself a sensation,—nay, the very sensation which previously it was supposed to create,—it becomes conspicuously absurd for us to cry out: ‘Oh, then *this* colour and its qualities seen to be outside the head, are really things inside the head, and the sensible block of granite so seen to be outside our bodies is merely an illusive object produced and existing thus illusively within our pericraneæ; we must, therefore, suppose in all such cases another kind of thing and other qualities, however much unknown and dissimilar, yet corresponding, outside these pericraneæ.’

The present objection then is answered, as I have observed above, by the common-sense fact that the sensible object or sense-phenomenon,—the chair or table which we see outside us,—is not a thing within us; that what is perceived does not require to be where the organ is of the power which perceives it; that what is called size, space, or distance, being a quality of things which are now known to be sense-phenomena, exists, in all its phases, where and as these sense-phenomena exist, *i.e.* is itself a sense-phenomenon, or sensible quality;—existing in strict relation to sentient (percipient) nature, or as we vulgarly express it, *within the mind*, just as those sensations (tactual or visible) do, by which alone it is delineated; but although within the mind, nevertheless, not within the skull, which latter is itself also within the mind,—a sense-phenomenon and

too small to contain the others. All the sense-phenomena of our sensuous Universe, and, among the rest, our skulls and brains, have in reality, and not, as we are here told, illusively, the exact sizes and exact distances, great and small which are seen and otherwise experienced to be connected with them in the vast expanse of nature; and do not, therefore, require the ridiculous hypothesis of any other imaginary sizes and distances outside all our knowledge, and beyond all that we see; *i.e.* sizes and distances which are, from their very nature, as impossible to be felt as a colour is or to be seen as a sound is.

Such is the purport here of Berkeley's reply to the second objection. I have, however, so altered the expression of it as to let the skull and brain have their proper place in it more distinctly and unequivocally than our opponents ordinarily allow them to have, and than, to an inexperienced reader, Berkeley's own statement would seem to give them.

The first part of his answer is, it will be observed in Sec. 42, that we have sensible sizes and distances outside our bodies in dreams and visions when we know that no duplicates of them exist or are required, independent of our perceptions. Why, he asks, may we not therefore have them also in the real Universe outside our bodies in real nature and among real things? This fact, however, gives only an analogy. It must not be mistaken for an argument.

*Fourth Objection: That we consider Sensible Objects to have an intermittent existence.*

45. Fourthly, it will be objected, that from the foregoing principles it follows, things are every moment annihilated and created anew. The objects of sense exist only when they are perceived: the trees therefore are in the garden, or the chairs in the parlour, no longer than while there is somebody by to perceive them. Upon *shutting my eyes*, all the furniture in the room is reduced to nothing, and barely upon opening them it is again created. In answer to all which, I refer the reader to what has been said in Secs. 3, 4, &c., and desire he will consider whether he means any thing by the actual existence of an idea, distinct from its being perceived. For my part, after the nicest inquiry I could make,



I am not able to discover that any thing else is meant by those words. And I once more entreat the reader to sound his own thoughts, and not suffer himself to be imposed on by words. If he can conceive it possible either for his ideas or their archetypes to exist without being perceived, then I give up the cause: but if he cannot, he will acknowledge it is unreasonable for him to stand up in defence of he knows not what, and pretend to charge on me as an absurdity the not assenting to those propositions which at bottom have no meaning in them.

46. It will not be amiss to observe, how far the received principles of philosophy are themselves chargeable with those pretended absurdities. It is thought strangely absurd that upon closing my eyelids all the visible objects round me should be reduced to nothing; and yet is not this what philosophers commonly acknowledge when they agree on all hands that light and colours, which alone are the proper and immediate objects of sight, are mere sensations that exist no longer than they are perceived? Again, it may to some perhaps seem very incredible, that things should be every moment creating; yet this very notion is commonly taught in the schools. For the *schoolmen*, though they acknowledge the existence of matter, and that the whole mundane fabric is framed out of it, are nevertheless of opinion that it cannot subsist without the divine conservation, which by them is expounded to be a continual creation.

47. Further, a little thought will discover to us, that though we allow the existence of matter or corporeal substance, yet it will unavoidably follow *from the principles which are now generally admitted*, that the particular bodies, of what kind soever, do none of them exist while they are not perceived. For it is evident from Sec. 11 and the following sections, that the matter philosophers contend for is an incomprehensible somewhat, *which hath none of those particular qualities whereby the bodies falling under our senses are distinguished one from another*. But to make this more plain, it must be remarked, that the infinite divisibility of matter

is now universally allowed, at least by the most approved and considerable philosophers, who, on the received principles, demonstrate it beyond all exception. Hence it follows, that there is an infinite number of parts in each particle of matter, which are not perceived by sense. The reason, therefore, that any particular body seems to be of a finite magnitude, or exhibits only a finite number of parts to sense, is, not because it contains no more, since in itself it contains an infinite number of parts, *but because the sense is not acute enough to discern them.* In proportion, therefore, as the sense is rendered more acute, it perceives a greater number of parts in the object; that is, the object appears greater, and its figure varies, those parts in its extremities which were before unperceivable, appearing now to bound it in very different lines and angles from those perceived by an obtuser sense. And, at length, after various changes of size and shape, when the sense becomes infinitely acute, the body shall seem infinite. During all which, there is no alteration in the body, but only in the sense. *Each body, therefore, considered in itself, is infinitely extended, and consequently void of all shape or figure.* From which it follows, though we should grant the existence of matter to be ever so certain, yet it is withal as certain, the materialists themselves are by their own principles forced to acknowledge, that neither the particular bodies perceived by sense, nor any thing like them, exist without the mind. Matter, I say, and each particle thereof, is according to them infinite and shapeless, *and it is the mind that frames all that variety of bodies which compose the visible world, any one whereof does not exist longer than it is perceived.*

48. If we consider it the objection proposed in Sect. 45 will not be found reasonably charged on the principles we have premised, so as in truth to make any objection at all against our notions. For though we hold, indeed, the objects of sense to be nothing else but ideas which cannot exist unperceived, yet may we not hence conclude they have no existence, except only while they are perceived by us, since

*there may be some other spirit that perceives them, though we do not.* Wherever bodies are said to have no existence without the mind, I would not be understood to mean this or that particular mind, but *all minds whatsoever.* It does not therefore follow from the foregoing principles, that bodies are annihilated and created every moment, or exist not at all during the intervals between our perception in them.

The fourth objection supposed to lie against this grand discovery of Berkeley's (that Matter is a Phenomenon), is that the discovery involves an incessant annihilation and creation of the Sensible Universe. This objection is founded on the misconception of some few 'philosophers' to the effect that a Poem or a History, or our knowledge of anything can only exist while we are conscious of it, and that in general all phenomenal existence or reality is intermittent,—a misconception which has been already thoroughly discussed in the commentary on Secs. 22, 23, 24.

In reply to the objection here made, Berkeley remarks most justly that there is none whatever of this continuous creation and destruction, here supposed, involved in his interpretation of nature. He denies that a phenomenon of any kind ceases to exist merely because we are unconscious of it. Nevertheless, he subjoins the following reflections for the consideration of his critics upon this point:—

1. Even if it were true that unconsciousness necessarily destroyed phenomenal existence, this fact could not disprove the *à priori* reasoning by which his discovery is established. To suppose it could do so, is as though the rotundity of our planet could not be accepted, since it would follow from this form of the earth that we move about upon it with our heads downwards and our feet above us. He replies, secondly, that precisely the objection here made by his opponents against his doctrine would, if true, exist equally against their insensible matter theory, inasmuch as they hold light and colours to be destroyed by the closing of the eyelids, and only capable of being restored upon the eyelids being reopened; and all tactual qualities also to cease existing when they are not actually felt, when, for instance, we only *see* the chairs. He also remarks, thirdly, that even if it were true that, as these

very superficial opponents think, the sparrow's closing its eyes *destroyed* all the light and colours round it, to be again restored on its reopening its eyes, and true that the Iliad ceases to exist every time we cease to think of it, yet, nevertheless, this creating incessantly, and incessantly destroying, would not be anything more wonderful or difficult to account for than the preserving incessantly things so liable to vanish, and could very well be effected by the same agent as could preserve them. He remarks, fourthly, that one and the same sensible object (or group of sensible qualities), is being constantly altered in all these qualities by its removal to or from the organs of sense; all which change is quite as wonderful as the incessant annihilation and creation would be,—in fact is itself practically this very annihilation and creation; for it takes place without any help whatever from the supposed insensible object, which, according to the insensible matter hypothesis, remains unchanged under all the changes. And fifthly, he invites those who think that the winking of the sparrow destroys light and colours, to reflect that percipient nature, through its organs, seems to be co-extensive with the non-percipient, and consists, as the non-percipient does, of various distinct units; so that in no case is it true that the merely not being perceived by one of these units means the destruction of its localized relation to percipient nature, or is tantamount to its not being a localized perception. In short, as already often said, it is the natural permanence of the spirit, and not its consciousness, that determines the permanence of phenomenal nature.

*Fifth Objection: Extension, Space, or Size not a quality of the Mind.*

49. Fifthly, it may perhaps be *objected*, that if extension and figure exist only in the mind, it follows that the mind is extended and figured: since extension is a mode or attribute, which (to speak with the schools) is predicated of the subject in which it exists. I answer, Those qualities are in the mind *only as they are perceived by it*, that is, not by way of *mode* or *attribute*, but only by way of *idea*; and it no more follows, that the soul or mind is extended because

extension exists in it alone, than it does that it is red or blue, because those colours are *on all hands* acknowledged to exist in it, and nowhere else. As to what philosophers say of subject and mode, that seems very groundless and unintelligible. For instance, in this proposition, a die is hard, extended, and square; they will have it that the word *die* denotes a subject or substance, distinct from the hardness, extension, and figure, which are predicated of it, and in which they exist. This I cannot comprehend: to me a die seems to be nothing distinct from those things which are termed its modes or accidents. And to say a die is hard, extended, and square, is not to attribute those qualities to a subject distinct from and supporting them, but only an explication of the meaning of the word *die*.

The shape and size and colour and other sensible qualities in that group of such qualities which we call a sensible or material object, qualify this group,—the very group they constitute,—and do not qualify anything else. This all our more enlightened opponents admit. These qualities do not characterize something that is in itself entirely devoid of all such qualities,—whether that something be the perceiving spirit, or the unperceiving mysterious something which is supposed to originate what is perceived, and the position of which is rendered a matter of considerable difficulty for these theorists; for if it is wrapped up in any way within the sensible qualities, as some suppose, it must therefore be within the skull, where alone they suppose these qualities to be, and where it would not therefore answer the purpose for which it was intended; and if it is placed as is intended at any of the vast and various distances outside the skull, it cannot then, according to those theorists, be any part of the sensible object, nor in the smallest degree qualified by its sensible qualities. And here we see at once the utter nonsense of all these physicists who, as those here alluded to by Berkeley, speak of shape and size and colour and weight, as '*states*' of conscious nature. Such things are never states of conscious nature, or '*states of consciousness*,' as so many fancy them to be. They are states of their own group, but that is all.

*Sixth Objection : Matter without material qualities very useful to Science.*

50. Sixthly, you will say there have been a great many things explained by matter and motion : take away these, and you destroy the whole corpuscular philosophy, and undermine those mechanical principles which have been applied with so much success to account for the *phenomena*. In short, whatever advances have been made, either by ancient or modern philosophers, in the study of nature, do all proceed on the supposition, that corporeal substance or matter doth really exist. To this I *answer*, that there is not any one *phenomenon* explained on that supposition, which may not as well be explained without it, as might easily be made appear by an *induction of particulars*. To explain the *phenomena*, is all one as to show, why upon such and such occasions we are affected with such and such ideas. But how matter should operate on a spirit, or produce any idea in it, is what no philosopher will pretend to explain. It is therefore evident, there can be no use of matter in natural philosophy. Besides, they who attempt to account for things, do it not by *corporeal substance*, but by figure, motion, and other qualities, which are in truth no more than mere ideas, and therefore cannot be the cause of any thing, as hath been already shown. See Sec. 25.

In this, the sixth objection in the list, it is said that we <sup>\*</sup>cannot explain any of the great facts of nature without the aid of this invisible corporeal or material substratum-point devised on purpose to explain them. Berkeley reminds these opponents that scientific men themselves are the foremost to acknowledge that even if the thing in question were known as an element in things, they could not explain any one fact of nature by means of it; that they do not see how this curious insensible and unextended substratum in the granite, even if shown to exist there, could produce, or in any way account for, the visible and extended block before us. What then is the use of supposing that there is this mysterious insensible agent, so like a little spirit either wrapped up in the block of granite, or hovering

around it at some unknown but often considerable distance from it?

Some of our opponents, at this point, seeing the nonsense of this mysterious agent so situated, have suggested the more reasonable notion that the shapes and sizes of things would do very well for the substratum of the other qualities. All we would here ask is, why should the shapes and sizes, or even the solidity, be the only sensible qualities that are to be considered the substratum of things, instead of allowing the weight and hardness and other sensible qualities to participate in this privilege?

Some, again, have improved upon this; and suggest that perhaps some of the sensible qualities (size and motion for instance) could produce the others without the help either of any other unperceiving producer or any unperceived substratum. But, to say nothing about such very active abstractions, our opponents generally do not appear to be much pleased with such suggestions, as they imply what is quite true, that in the material substance itself nothing is really wanted but sensible qualities and their laws. This little conjecture nevertheless appears, on the part of these philosophers, to be a gradual return to common sense.

In this Section Berkeley, as usual, employs the terms 'Matter' and Corporeal Substance as his opponents did to mean insensible or immaterial Matter. He here also employs the term 'phenomenon' to denote a fact of Nature as it is employed in the physical sciences. It has not therefore here its metaphysical signification of a 'mental thing' or 'Idea.'

*Seventh Objection: That we deny Secondary Causes.*

51. Seventhly, it will upon this be demanded whether it does not seem *absurd to take away natural causes, and ascribe every thing to the immediate operation of spirits?* We must no longer say upon these principles that fire heats, or water cools, but that a spirit heats, and so forth. Would not a man be deservedly laughed at, who should talk after this manner? I answer, he would so; in such things we ought to *think with the learned, and speak with the vulgar.* They who to demonstration are convinced of the truth of the Copernican system, do nevertheless say the sun rises, the

sun sets, or comes to the meridian : and if they affected a contrary style in common talk, it would without doubt appear very ridiculous. A little reflection on what is here said will make it manifest, that the common use of language would receive no manner of alteration or disturbance from the admission of our tenets.

52. *In the ordinary affairs of life, any phrases may be retained*, so long as they incite in us proper sentiments, or dispositions to act in such a manner as is necessary for our *well-being*, how false soever they may be, if taken in a strict and *speculative sense*. Nay this is unavoidable, since propriety being regulated by *custom*, language is suited to the *received* opinions, which are not always the truest. Hence it is impossible, even in the most rigid philosophic reasonings, so far to alter the bent and genius of the tongue we speak, as never to give a handle for cavillers to pretend difficulties and inconsistencies. But a fair and ingenuous reader will collect the sense from the scope and tenor and connection of a discourse, making allowances for those inaccurate modes of speech which use has made inevitable.

53. As to the *opinion that there are no corporeal causes*, this has been heretofore maintained by some of the schoolmen, as it is of late by others among the modern philosophers, who though they allow matter to exist, yet will have God alone to be the immediate efficient cause of all things. These men saw, that amongst all the objects of sense, there was none which had power or activity included in it, and that by consequence this was likewise true of whatever bodies they supposed to exist without the mind, like unto the immediate objects of sense. But then, that they should suppose an innumerable multitude of created beings, which they acknowledge are not capable of producing any one effect in nature, and which therefore are made to no manner of purpose, since God might have done every thing as well without them; this I say, though we should allow it possible, must yet be a very unaccountable and extravagant supposition.

The seventh of these objections is that, by the discovery



insisted upon as thus made by Berkeley, the laws of nature and secondary causes are ignored and denied. But is this so? All that we mean is that sensible objects are Secondary, not Originating Causes. They blindly follow laws prescribed to them, and do not themselves prescribe or originate these laws. All admit this now; which, moreover, is very evident, as sense-phenomena or ideas of sense have, we easily see, no more power of action in them than 'mere ideas' have. It used to be thought that if there were for every object of sense an atomic piece of something unknown and invisible, wrapped up in the group of qualities, these invisible little things in the bodies of the Universe—one in each body—might perhaps be able to produce mysterious effects in concert with one another and independent of all prescribed law, without our being able to know how this could be effected. But what are we to think of an age in which such frivolous nonsense was called Science? That age is passed for most of us; three remarks, however, may be useful: (1) what is here spoken of is something immaterial—something without any of the qualities of matter; (2) our opponents themselves admit, not only that the unextended and insensible something that they thus curiously call 'matter,' cannot exist in the sensible object or group of sensible qualities, commonly so called, since these, they think, are in the skull where this, they consider, could not be; but also that they do not know even whether this point exists outside the sensible Universe any more than they know whether there is a city as large as London on the side of the moon that we never see; (3) if the unextended atom in question did exist, we should not see how we could reasonably attribute to it the effects of which its advocates usually even still think it capable as a sort of Secondary Cause.

*Eighth Objection: Universal belief in a kind of Matter without material qualities.*

54. In the eighth place, the universal concurrent assent of mankind may be thought by some an invincible argument in behalf of matter, or the existence of external things. Must we suppose the whole world to be mistaken? and if so, what cause can be assigned of so wide-spread and pre-

dominant an error? I answer *first*, That upon a narrow inquiry, it will not perhaps be found, so many as is imagined do really believe the existence of matter or things without the mind. Strictly speaking, to believe that which involves a contradiction, or has no meaning in it, is impossible : and whether the foregoing expressions are not of that sort, I refer it to the impartial examination of the reader. In one sense indeed, men may be said to believe that matter exists, that is, they *act* as if the immediate cause of their sensations, which affects them every moment and is so nearly present to them, were some senseless, unthinking being. But that they should clearly apprehend any meaning marked by those words, and form thereof a settled *speculative* opinion, is what I am not able to conceive. This is not the only instance wherein men impose upon themselves, by imagining they believe those propositions they have often heard, though at the bottom they have no meaning in them.

55. But *secondly*, though we should grant a notion to be ever so universally and steadfastly adhered to, yet this is but a weak argument of its truth, to whoever considers what a vast number of prejudices and false opinions are every where embraced with the utmost tenaciousness, by the unreflecting (which are the far greater) part of mankind. There was a time when the antipodes and motion of the earth were looked upon as monstrous absurdities, even by men of learning ; and if it be considered what a small proportion they bear to the rest of mankind, we shall find that at this day, those notions have gained but a very inconsiderable footing in the world.

The eighth objection brought here against our denial of there being this whole Universe of insensible things existing external to the sensible Universe, is that the majority of mankind believe in the existence of these unknown 'external things,' as they are called, outside our knowledge and outside our understanding, as well as external to our Universe.

To this Berkeley naturally answers that, if it were indeed true that most men believed in such 'external things' and

the insensible granite thus supposed to hover somewhere outside the sensible masses of it, this would be a very poor reason for rejecting the great discovery in question that such external things are impossible. He further answers, however, that the majority of mankind do not believe in these unknown things external to all we see or feel, nor ever did believe in them, nor could probably be easily made to think that any one ever held so childish a creed. In fact, only very few even of the learned write or ever wrote a word leading us to think that they believed in these external insensible things outside our Universe and outside all understanding, as well as outside all knowledge; these few becoming fewer every day,—now reduced we may almost say to half-a-dozen philosophers, with perhaps a score of less intelligent partisans, who, like their chiefs, acknowledge themselves inadequate to understand the reasonableness and clear truth of what is here taught, and therefore, think they are entitled to condemn it.

*Ninth Objection: If it is a prejudice, account for it.*

56. But it is demanded, that we assign a cause of this prejudice, and account for its obtaining in the world. To this I answer, That men knowing they perceived several ideas, *whereof they themselves were not the authors*, as not being excited from within, nor depending on the operation of their wills, this made them maintain, those ideas or objects of perception had an *existence independent of, and without the mind*, without ever dreaming that a contradiction was involved in those words. But philosophers have plainly seen that the immediate objections of perception do not exist without the mind, *they in some degree* corrected the mistake of the vulgar, but at the same time run into another which seems no less absurd, to wit, that there are certain objects really existing without the mind, or having a subsistence distinct from being perceived, *of which our ideas are only images* or resemblances, imprinted by those objects on the mind. And this notion of the philosophers owes its origin to the same cause with the former, namely, their being conscious that they were not the authors, of their own

sensations, which they evidently knew were imprinted from without, and which therefore must have some cause distinct from the minds on which they are imprinted.

57. But *why they should suppose the ideas of sense to be excited in us by things in their likeness*, and not rather have recourse to *spirit* which alone can act, may be accounted for, *first*, because they were not aware of the repugnancy there is, as well in supposing things like unto our ideas existing without, as in attributing to them *power or activity*. *Secondly*, because the supreme spirit, which excites those ideas in our minds, is not marked out and limited to our views *by any particular finite collection of sensible ideas*, as human agents are by their size, complexion, limbs, and motions. And *thirdly*, because his operations are regular and uniform. Whenever the course of nature is interrupted by a miracle, men are ready to own the presence of a superior agent. But when we see things go on in the ordinary course, they do not excite in us any reflection; their order and concatenation, though it be an argument of the greatest wisdom, power, and goodness in their creator, is yet so constant and familiar to us, that we do not think them the immediate effects of a *free spirit*: especially since inconstancy and mutability in acting, though it be an imperfection, is looked on as a mark of *freedom*.

But if this insensible sort of thing is merely a prejudice of some of the learned, and not something manifestly hovering round the stone and the iron which we handle and see, how, ask our opponents, do you account for so extraordinary a prejudice? We admit, say they, that the sort of thing now in question is entirely invisible and otherwise insensible,—as much so as a spirit is or a mere idea is,—that it occupies no more space than a mathematical point,—that we have not the slightest grounds for suspecting that such a thing exists anywhere, nor of what use it would be if it did. We admit all this, yet we say that since some learned men once thought that there was such an ingredient in stones and iron, and since other scientific men still think that there is some such in-

sensible thing hovering near all sensible objects, although not actually inside them, we therefore consider ourselves justified in supposing that there probably is some such invisible thing connected with these objects in one way or the other, unless you can show us how the error could have crept in. Besides the answers here given by Berkeley in the text, see also the Sections from 73 to 81; all which may be summed up in the simple fact, that the error began from a misapprehension as to the point at issue, and was persevered in merely upon the old familiar principle of human nature which makes the ploughman so unwilling to employ a new kind of plough. A main source of the error, however, seems to be, what I have already mentioned, that for a long time the colours in the room, and which we see outside the colours of our heads and at various distances from these, were supposed to produce sensations inside the colours of our heads, by the aid of which sensations we were supposed to perceive these external colours round us in the room; that we, however, at last came to know that these colours seen around us outside the skull, are themselves sensations, notwithstanding the fact that they are outside our heads, and, moreover, the very sensations which we, at first, supposed to be by these colours of the room produced within our heads as a means of perceiving the colours outside our heads; and that, on this account, scientific men, instead of seeing that sensations, like noise and colours, could be outside the skull, came hastily to the absurd conclusion that the sensations which we see outside the colours of our heads, are only illusively outside these colours but really within them, there being, they think, these mathematical matter-points outside us, at various distances from us, producing the colours inside us, and really constituting thus outside us the external objects at these various distances, the only *sine quâ non* of their constitution being that such 'external things,' or rather mathematical points, are as entirely free from every other material or sensible quality as they are from space or size. It seems incredible that such a confusion should have been made, and such preposterous imaginings entered upon by men of depth and thought in other matters; certainly in no sphere of business could it have occurred in which, as in the case of the Trans-Atlantic telegraph, for instance, the commercial interest depended upon scientific accuracy; but in this case

of unknown 'external things,' there was a *carte blanche* given, nay, even a prize offered by the Press to all forms of rambling thought, and to all forms of plausibility, inaccuracy, and big books.\* The main fact of misconception, however, will be found to lie in that now here stated, all the others, adverted to by Berkeley, having been invented by our opponents merely to support or corroborate that one; and this, it will be seen, abundantly explains the origin of the prejudice. It began, as I say, in a misapprehension of nature's fact, and has been continued by some few writers through the mere doggedness of an unelastic intellect.

Unfortunately the expression 'without the mind' here and elsewhere in the text, seems to mean 'outside the head;' whereas it does not. The whole sensible Universe is, we all see and feel, a thing outside the head, but no part of it whatever is or could be without or outside the mind; the head itself being, according to Berkeley and to all of us, a thing 'within the mind,' just as the starry heavens are, or as the earth is; nor when we say that things are within the mind, do we ever thereby mean that they are within the skull, which is merely a misapprehension of the unscientific. The colours which we see around us, can be said in a scientific sense to be within the mind of the observer, but in no sense is it true that they are within his skull.

*Tenth Objection: Many Sensible Objects of which no person was ever conscious.*

58. Tenthly, it will be objected, that the notions we advance are inconsistent with several sound truths in philosophy and mathematics. For example *the motion of the earth* is now universally admitted by astronomers, as a truth grounded on the clearest and most convincing reasons but on the foregoing principles, there can be no such thing. For motion being only an idea, it follows that if it be not perceived, it exists not; but the motion of the earth is not perceived by sense. I answer, that tenet, if rightly understood, will be found to agree with the principles we have premised; for the question, whether the earth moves or no,

amounts in reality to no more than this, to wit, whether we have reason to conclude from what hath been observed by astronomers, that if we were placed in such and such circumstances, and such or such a position and distance, both from the earth and sun, we should perceive the former to move among the choir of the planets, and appearing in all respects like one of them : and this, by the established rules of nature, which we have no reason to mistrust, is reasonably collected from the phenomena.

59. We may, from the experience we have had of the train and succession of ideas in our minds, often make, I will not say uncertain conjectures, but sure and well-grounded predictions, concerning the ideas we shall be affected with, pursuant to a great train of actions, and be enabled to pass a right judgment of what would have appeared to us, in case we were in circumstances very different from those we are in at present. Herein consists the knowledge of nature, which may preserve its use and certainty very consistently with what hath been said. It will be easy to apply this to whatever objections of the like sort may be drawn from the magnitude of the stars, or any other discoveries in astronomy or nature.

The tenth objection is little else than a repetition of the fourth. Our opponents suppose us to say, as they themselves do say, that since we do not see the earth's motion, the earth does not move, and that since we do not see its rotundity, it is not round; that, when we only look at the rocks, they are not hard, nor even the microscopic world in the skull at all existing, since we cannot see it all at one glance. It is our more learned opponents themselves, as I have just remarked, not we, who hold these foolish notions, and they alone hold them; nay, with so much confidence do they hold them that they think everybody else must hold them also. Neither the unscientific public, however, nor the metaphysician finds it necessary to think that when in broad daylight we go out of the room we take off all the colours and the light with us, any more than that the *Iliad* does not exist when we are only thinking of its last page, or that our faces do not exist when we only see our hands.

*Eleventh Objection: Uselessness of organizing merely Sensible Matter.*

60.\* In the eleventh place, it will be demanded *to what purpose serves that curious organization of plants, and the admirable mechanism in the parts of animals?* Might not vegetables grow, and shoot forth leaves and blossoms, and animals perform all their motions, as well without as with all that variety of internal parts so elegantly contrived and put together, *which being ideas have nothing powerful or operative in them, nor have any necessary connection with the effects ascribed to them?* If it be a spirit that immediately produces every effect by a *fiat*, or act of his will, we must think all that is fine and artificial in the works, whether of man or nature, to be made in vain. By this doctrine, though an *artist* hath made the spring and wheels, and every movement of a watch, and adjusted them in such a manner as he knew would produce the motions he designed; yet he must think all this done to no purpose, and that it is an intelligence which directs the index, and points to the hour of the day. If so, why may not the intelligence do it, without his being at the pains of making the movements, and putting them together? Why does not an empty case serve as well as another? And how comes it to pass, than whenever there is any fault in the going of a watch, there is some corresponding disorder to be found in the movements, which being mended by a skilful hand, all is right again?

The like may be said of all the clock-work of nature, great part whereof is so wonderfully fine and subtile, as scarce to be discerned by the best microscope. In short it will be asked, how upon our principles any tolerable account can be given, or any final cause assigned of an innumerable multitude of bodies and machines framed with the most exquisite art, which in the common philosophy have very apposite uses assigned them, and serve to explain abundance of phenomena.

61. To all which I answer, *first*, that though there were



some difficulties relating to the administration of providence, and the uses by it assigned to the several parts of nature, which I could not solve by the foregoing principles, yet this objection could be of small weight against the truth and certainty of those things which may be proved *à priori*, with the utmost evidence. *Secondly*, but neither are the received principles free from the like difficulties; for it may still be demanded, to what end God should take those round-about methods of effecting things by instruments and machines which no one can deny might have been effected by the mere command of his will, without all that apparatus: nay, (*thirdly*,) if we narrowly consider it, we shall find the objection may be retorted with greater force on those who hold the existence of those machines without the mind; for it has been made evident, that solidity, bulk, figure, motion, and the like, have no activity or efficacy in them, so as to be capable of producing any one effect in nature. See Sec. 25. Whoever therefore supposes them to exist (allowing the supposition possible) when they are not perceived, does it manifestly to no purpose; since the only use that is assigned to them, as they exist unperceived, is that they produce those perceivable effects, which in truth cannot be ascribed to any thing but spirit.

62. But to come nearer the difficulty, it must be observed, that though the fabrication of all those parts and organs be not absolutely necessary to the producing any effect, yet it is necessary to the producing of things in a constant, regular way, according to the laws of nature. There are certain general laws that run through the whole chain of natural effects: these are learned by the observation and study of nature, and are by men applied as well to the framing artificial things for the use and ornament of life, as to the explaining the various phenomena: which explication consists only in showing the conformity any particular phenomenon hath to the general laws of nature, or which is the same thing, in discovering the uniformity there is in the production of natural effects; as will be evident to whoever shall

attend to the several instances wherein philosophers pretend to account for appearances. That there is a great and conspicuous use in these regular constant methods of working observed by the supreme Agent, hath been shown in Sec. 31. And it is no less visible, that a particular size, figure, motion, and disposition of parts are necessary, though not absolutely to the producing any effect, yet to the producing it according to the standing mechanical laws of nature. Thus, for instance, it cannot be denied that God, or the intelligence which sustains and rules the ordinary course of things, might, if he were minded to produce a miracle, cause all the motions on the dial-plate of a watch, though nobody had ever made the movements, and put them in it: but yet if he will act agreeably to the rules of mechanism, by him for wise ends established and maintained in the creation, it is necessary that those actions of the watch-maker, whereby he makes the movements and rightly adjusts them, precede the production of the aforesaid motions; as also that any disorder in them be attended with the perception of some corresponding disorder in the movements, which being once corrected, all is right again.

63. It may indeed on some occasions be *necessary*, that the *Author of Nature display his overruling power* in producing some appearance out of his ordinary series of things. Such exceptions from the general rules of nature are proper to *surprise and awe men* into an acknowledgment of the divine being: but then they are to be used but seldom, otherwise there is a plain reason why they should fail of that effect. Besides, God seems to choose the *convincing our reason* of his attributes by the works of nature, which discover so much harmony and contrivance in their make, and are such plain indications of wisdom and beneficence in their Author, rather than to *astonish* us into a belief of his Being by *anomalous and surprising events*.

64. To see this matter in a yet clearer light, I shall observe that what has been objected in Sec. 60 amounts in reality to no more than this: ideas are not any how and at random

produced, there being a certain order and connexion between them, like to that of cause and effect : there are also several combinations of them, each in a very regular and artificial manner, which seem like so many instruments in the hand of nature, that being hid, as it were, behind the scenes, have a secret operation in producing those appearances which are seen on the theatre of the world, being themselves discernible to the curious eye of the philosopher. But since one idea cannot be the cause of another, to what purpose is that connection? and since those instruments, being barely *ineffacious perceptions* in the mind, are not subservient to the production of natural effects, it is demanded why they are made, or, in other words, what reason can be assigned why God should make us, upon a close inspection into his works, behold so great variety of ideas, so artfully laid together, and so much according to rule; it not being credible, that he would be at the expense (if one may so speak) of all that art and regularity to no purpose?

65. To all which my *answer* is, *first*, that the connexion of ideas does not imply the relation of *cause* and *effect*, but only of a mark or *sign* with the thing *signified*. The *fire* which I see is not the cause of the pain I suffer upon my approaching it, but the mark that forewarns me of it. In like manner, the noise that I hear is not the effect of this or that motion or collision of the ambient bodies, but the sign thereof. *Secondly*, the reason why ideas are formed into machines—that is, artificial and regular combinations—is the same with that for combining letters into words. That a few original ideas may be made to signify a *great number of effects and actions*, it is necessary they be variously combined together; and to the end their use be *permanent and universal*, these combinations must be made by *rule*, and with *wise contrivance*. By this means abundance of information is conveyed unto us concerning what we are to expect from such and such actions, and what methods are proper to be taken for the exciting such and such ideas: which in effect is all that I conceive to be distinctly meant,

when it is said that by discerning the figure, texture, and mechanism of the inward parts of bodies, whether natural or artificial, we may attain to know the several uses and properties depending thereon, or the nature of the thing.

66. Hence it is evident that those *things* which, *under the notion of a cause co-operating or concurring to the production of effects, are altogether inexplicable*, and run us into great absurdities, may be very naturally explained, and have a proper and obvious use assigned them, when they are considered only as marks or signs for our information. And it is the *searching after and endeavouring to understand those signs* (this language, if I may so call it) *instituted by the Author of nature*, that ought to be the employment of the natural philosopher, and not the pretending to explain things by corporeal causes; which doctrine seems to have too much estranged the minds of men from that active principle, that supreme and wise spirit, ‘in whom we live, move, and have our being.’

The eleventh objection is to the effect that all the development of nature is carried on by the Immaterial Substance which our opponents call ‘Matter;’ that plants and animal bodies are gradually produced through the mechanical action of some insensible little agents outside the Universe of sense; (because our opponents themselves admit that this Insensible cannot be enclosed in the Sensible), and that all this mechanism of growth is rendered useless, if we suppose its results to be attained independently of these supposed atomic agents *outside* the world of sense and mind, one such agent for each sensible object. But this is not an objection to Berkeley’s doctrine, viz., the Phenomenal Nature of our Material Substance. It is on the contrary a full recognition of its truth. Our opponents see that their insensible something, being outside the Universe of sense and mind, cannot be wrapped up in the group of sensible qualities which is growing and organized; the changes in the group, therefore, are according to them being carried out under law in a way this mere group itself of sensible qualities never could accomplish, and through

the agency as they think of the aforesaid 'Something,' which is without material qualities of any kind, therefore, Immaterial and wholly external to the sensible Universe; which something so placed superintends these changes and the execution of nature's laws which it is carrying out in them. There is, however, in all this no dispute with Berkeley, and no objection to his Doctrine; he also has his Immaterial Agent outside the whole Universe of sense and mind,—but only ONE such agent for the whole Universe, viz., the Absolute which superintends the changes of Phenomenal Nature carried on according to fixed laws,—laws of growth and mechanism as well as others; for any other system,—one for instance, of abrupt and lawless change,—would have rendered our understandings useless, and have given them no sphere of action.

*Twelfth Objection: Immaterial or Insensible Matter, though not actually wanted, yet not impossible; and might be of use to the Supreme Cause although not to us.*

67. In the twelfth place, it may perhaps be objected that though it be clear from what has been said that there can be no such thing as an inert, senseless, extended, solid, figured, moveable substance, existing without the mind, such as philosophers describe matter, yet if any man shall leave out of his idea of *matter* the positive ideas of extension, figure, solidity, and motion, and say that he means only by that word an inert senseless substance, that exists without the mind, or unperceived, which is the *occasion of our ideas*, or at the presence whereof God is pleased to excite ideas in us, it doth not appear but that matter taken in this sense may possibly exist. In answer to which I say, *first*, that it seems no less absurd to suppose a substance without accidents than it is to suppose accidents without a substance. But, *secondly*, though we should grant this unknown substance may possibly exist, yet *where can it be supposed to be?* That it exists not in the mind is agreed, and that it exists not in place is no less certain; *since all* (place or) *extension exists only in the mind*, as hath been

already proved. It remains therefore that it exists nowhere at all.

68. Let us examine a little the description that is here given us of *matter*. It neither acts, nor perceives, nor is perceived: for this is all that is meant by saying it is an *inert, senseless, unknown* substance; which is a definition entirely made up of negatives, excepting only the relative notion of its standing under or supporting: but then it must be observed, that it *supports* nothing at all; and how nearly this comes to the description of a *nonentity*, I desire may be considered. But, say you, it is the *unknown occasion, at the presence of which* ideas are excited in us by the will of God. Now I would fain know how any thing can be *present* to us, which is neither perceivable by sense nor reflection, nor capable of producing any idea in our minds, nor is at all extended, nor hath any form, nor exists in any place. The words *to be present*, when thus applied, must needs be taken in some abstract and strange meaning, and which I am not able to comprehend.

69. Again, let us examine what is meant by *occasion*; so far as I can gather from the common use of language, that word signifies either the agent which *produces any effect*, or else something that is *observed to accompany* or go before it, in the ordinary course of things. But when it is applied to matter as above described, it can be taken in neither of those senses. For matter is said to be passive and inert, and so cannot be an *agent* or efficient cause. It is also *unperceivable*, as being devoid of all sensible qualities, and so cannot be the occasion of our perceptions in the latter sense: as when the *burning my finger* is said to be the occasion of the pain that attends it. What, therefore, can be meant by calling matter an *occasion*? this term is either used in no sense at all, or else in some sense very distant from its received signification.

70. You will perhaps say that *matter*, though it be not

perceived by us, is nevertheless perceived by God, to whom it is the occasion of exciting ideas in our minds. For, say you, since we observe our sensations to be imprinted in an *orderly and constant manner*, it is but reasonable to suppose there are certain constant and regular occasions of their being produced. That is to say, that there are certain permanent and distinct parcels of matter, corresponding to our ideas, which, though they do not excite them in our minds, or in any ways immediately affect us, as being altogether passive and unperceivable to us, they are nevertheless to God, by whom they are perceived, as it were so many occasions to remind him when and what ideas to imprint on our minds: *that so things may go on in a constant, uniform manner.*

71. In answer to this I observe, that as the notion of matter is here stated, the question is no longer concerning the existence of a thing distinct from *spirit* and *idea*, from perceiving and being perceived: but whether there are not certain ideas, of I know not what sort, in the mind of God, which are so many marks or notes that direct him how to produce sensations in our minds, in a constant and regular method: much after the same manner as a musician is directed by the notes of music to produce that harmonious train and composition of sound, which is called a *tune*; though they who hear the music do not perceive the notes, and may be entirely ignorant of them. But this notion of matter seems too extravagant to deserve a confutation. Besides it is in effect no objection against what we have advanced, to wit, that there is no senseless, *unperceived substance*.

72. If we follow the light of reason, we shall, from the constant, uniform method of our sensations, collect the goodness and the wisdom of the *Spirit* who excites them in our minds. But this is all that I can see reasonably concluded from thence. To me, I say, it is evident that the being of a *Spirit infinitely wise, good, and powerful* is abundantly sufficient to explain all the appearances of nature. But as for *inert, senseless matter*, nothing that I perceive has

any the least connexion with it, or leads to the thoughts of it. And I would fain see any one explain any the meanest *phenomenon* in nature by it, or show any manner of reason, though in the lowest rank of probability, that he can have for its existence; or even make any tolerable sense or meaning of that supposition. For as to its being an occasion, we have, I think, evidently shown that with regard to us it is no occasion: it remains therefore that it must be, if at all, the occasion to God of exciting ideas in us; and what this amounts to, we have just now seen.

73. It is worth while to reflect a little on the *motives* which induced men to suppose the existence of *Material Substance*; that so having observed the gradual ceasing and expiration of those motives or reasons, we may proportionably withdraw the assent that was grounded on them. *First*, therefore, it was thought that colour, figure, motion, and the rest of the sensible qualities or accidents, did really exist without the mind; and for this reason, it seemed needful to suppose some *unthinking substratum* or substance wherein they did exist since they could not be conceived to exist by themselves. Afterwards, (*secondly*) in process of time, men being convinced that colours, sounds, and the rest of the sensible secondary qualities had no existence without the mind, they stripped this *substratum* or material substance of those qualities, leaving only the *primary ones*, figure, motion, and such like, which they still conceived to exist without the mind, and consequently to stand in need of a material support. But it having been shown, that none, even of these, can possibly exist otherwise than in a spirit or mind which perceives them, it follows that we have no longer any reason to suppose the being of *matter*. Nay that it is utterly impossible there should be any such thing, so long as that word is taken to denote an *unthinking substratum* of qualities or accidents, wherein they exist without the mind.

74. But though it be allowed by the *materialists* themselves, that matter was thought of only for the sake of



supporting accidents; and the reason entirely ceasing, one might expect the mind should naturally and without any reluctance at all, quit the belief of what was solely grounded thereon; yet the prejudice is riveted so deeply in our thoughts, that we can scarce tell how to part with it, and are therefore inclined, since the *thing* itself is indefensible, at least to retain the *name*; which we apply to I know not what abstracted and indefinite notions of *being* or *occasion*, though without any show of reason, at least so far as I can see. For what is there on our part, or what do we perceive amongst all the ideas, sensations, notions, which are imprinted on our minds, either by sense or reflection, from whence may be inferred the existence of an inert, thoughtless unperceived occasion? and on the other hand, on the part of an *all-sufficient spirit*, what can there be that should make us believe, or even suspect, he is *directed* by an inert occasion to excite ideas in our minds?

75. It is a very extraordinary instance of the force of prejudice, and much to be lamented, that the mind of man retains so great a fondness, against all the evidence of reason, for a stupid, thoughtless *somewhat*, by the interposition whereof it would, as it were, screen itself from the providence of God, and remove him further off from the affairs of the world. But though we do the utmost we can to secure the belief of *matter*, though when reason forsakes us, we endeavour to support our opinion on the bare possibility of the thing, and though we indulge ourselves in the full scope of an imagination not regulated by reason, to make out that poor *possibility*, yet the upshot of all is, that there are certain *unknown ideas* in the mind of God; for this, if anything, is all that I conceive to be meant by *occasion* with regard to God. And this, at the bottom, is no longer contending for the *thing*, but for the *name*.

76. Whether therefore there are such ideas in the mind of God, and whether they may be called by the name *matter*, I shall not dispute. But if you stick to the notion of an *unthinking* substance, or support of extension, motion, and

other sensible qualities, then to me is it most evidently impossible there should be any such thing. Since it is a plain repugnancy, that those qualities should exist in or be supported by an unperceiving substance.

77. But say you, though it be granted that there is no thoughtless support of extension, and the other qualities or accidents *which we perceive*; yet there may, perhaps, be some inert unperceiving substance, or *substratum* of *some other qualities*, as incomprehensible to us as colours are to a man born blind, *because we have not a sense adapted to them*. But if we had a new sense, we should possibly no more doubt of their existence, than a blind man made to see does of the existence of light and colours. I answer, *first*, if what you mean by the word 'matter' be only the *unknown support of unknown qualities*, it is no matter whether there is such a thing or not, since it no way concerns us: and I do not see the advantage there is in disputing about we know not *what*, and we know not *why*.

78. But, secondly, if we had a new sense, it *could only furnish us with new ideas or sensations*: and then we should have the same reason against their existing in an unperceiving substance, that has been already offered with relation to figure, motion, colour, and the like. Qualities, as hath been shown, are nothing else but *sensations* or *ideas*, which exist only in a *mind* perceiving them; and this is true not only of the ideas we are acquainted with at present, but likewise of all possible ideas whatsoever.

79. But you will *insist*, what if I have no reason to believe the existence of matter, what if I cannot assign any use to it, or explain anything by it, or even conceive what is meant by that word? Yet still it is no contradiction to say that matter exists, and that this matter is *in general* a *substance*, or *occasion of ideas*; though, indeed, to go about to unfold the meaning, or to adhere to any particular explication of those words, may be attended with great difficulties. I answer, when words are used without a meaning, you may put them together as you please, without danger of running

into a contradiction. You may say, for example, that *twice two* is equal to *seven*, so long as you declare you do not take the words of that proposition in their usual acceptation, but for marks of you know not what. And by the same reason you may say, there is an inert thoughtless substance without accidents, which is the occasion of our ideas. And we shall understand just as much by one proposition as the other.

80. In the last place, you will say, what if we give up the cause of material substance, and assert, that Matter is an unknown *Somewhat*, neither substance nor accident, spirit nor idea, inert, thoughtless, indivisible, immovable, unextended, existing in no place? For, say you, whatever may be urged against *substance* or *occasion*, or any other positive or relative notion of matter, hath no place at all, so long as this *negative definition of matter* is adhered to. I answer, you may, if so it shall seem good, use the word *matter* in the same sense that other men use *nothing*, and so make those terms convertible in your style. For after all, this is what appears to me to be the result of that definition, the parts whereof when I consider with attention, either collectively. or separate from each other, I do not find that there is any kind of effect or impression made on my mind, different from what is excited by the term *nothing*.

81. You will reply perhaps, that in the foresaid definition is included, what doth *sufficiently* distinguish it from nothing, the positive, abstract idea of *quiddity*, *entity*, or *existence* I own indeed, that those who pretend to the faculty of framing abstract general ideas, do talk as if they had such an idea, which is, say they, the most abstract and general notion of all, that is to me the most incomprehensible of all others. That there are a great variety of spirits of different orders and capacities, whose faculties, both in number and extent, are far exceeding those the author of my being has bestowed on me, I see no reason to deny. And for me to pretend to determine by my own few, stinted, narrow inlets of perception, what ideas the inexhaustible power of the

supreme Spirit may imprint upon them, were certainly the utmost folly and presumption. Since there may be, for aught that I know, innumerable sorts of ideas or sensations, as different from one another, and from all that I have perceived, as colours are from sounds. But how ready soever I may be to acknowledge the scantiness of my comprehension, with regard to the endless variety of spirits and ideas, that might possibly exist, yet for any one to pretend to a notion of entity or existence, *abstracted* from *spirit* and *idea*, from perceiving and being perceived, is, I suspect, a downright repugnancy and trifling with words.

It remains that we consider the objections which may possibly be made on the part of religion.

In the foregoing Sections we have again, as usual in Berkeley's time, the word 'phenomenon' in its unmetaphysical sense to signify any natural fact, and the word 'matter' in its 'philosophical' sense of Immaterial or Insensible Matter.

The twelfth objection is really, it will easily be seen, no objection to the doctrine nor denial of it, but merely a plea, to save their respectability as logicians, preferred by a few of our scientific men, to be allowed, by the rest of them, to say and to think that there is something, they know not what, outside and beyond the sensible Universe, outside the position of the most distant stars. There is here involved, it is quite clear, no denial nor even doubt of Berkeley's doctrine, since his doctrine applies only to the composition of the Material or Sensible Universe. We have, therefore, here no further point of controversy with these few scientific men who imagine themselves our opponents; for they seem at last entirely to agree with us. Even we, as well as they, hold that there is this 'Something' outside the remotest precincts of extension; the only difference between us apparently being that we are satisfied with ONE 'Something' which we call the Absolute, whereas they seem to have a separate Something or Absolute for almost every sensible object, therefore a whole Universe of Absolutes beyond the most distant stars. This, of course, is no denial of our doctrine that our Material Substance is a Phenomenon, and none, of the doctrine that our material

Universe is, throughout its whole composition, of a purely phenomenal or mental nature.

The reader will here now do well to run over again the different strippings which this material Absolute of our opponents has undergone.

At one time it was said to be a sort of 'matter,' without any very clear definition of what this word means; but it was soon admitted that their Absolute had not a single quality or attribute of matter belonging to it, and that it was absurd as well as dishonest to call a thing 'matter' which we admit to be immaterial, and to be, in that respect, exactly like spirit.

At another time, it was said to be a substratum or support of sensible qualities—something to keep them together, it being feared that what produced sensible qualities might not be able to keep them in their places; but it was soon admitted, by our more enlightened opponents, that their 'something' could not be this substratum; not only because their 'something,' was a mere mathematical point, being wholly without extension as well as shape; and a mathematical point could support nothing; but also because this 'something' was in one place and the sensible qualities in another. It could not, therefore, well be their substratum, even if it were clear that any other substratum were indispensable beside that supplied by the group itself of these sensible qualities.

At another stage of the discussion it was said that if there were, as some believed, outside the visible Universe, another universe, as it were, of mathematical points.—a separate point corresponding to each sensible object in the sensible Universe, these unextended points, outside all space, might be of use in suggesting to the Cause of the Sensible Universe (viz., to the Absolute), where and when the different sensible objects should be presented to the embodied percipients; but, since all mathematical points are precisely similar, and all the Sensible Objects of the Universe entirely different, this wildest effort at defending Insensible 'Matter' was very soon seen to be without Common Sense.

At a later stage of the controversy it was thought possible that these immaterial and unextended 'Somethings' beyond

the most distant stars might themselves be each a centre of power and each produce its own sensible group of qualities, although it could not be their substratum; but then came the difficulty and necessity of a certain agreement among all these mathematical points or immaterial centres of power in the production of their respective phenomena,—a difficulty which our opponents at length got to see could only be obviated by the substitution of one immaterial centre of power for the Several of their theory,—a conclusion this at which even pure physicists had already arrived long before these philosophers.

We see, then, that our opponents have all left the battlefield,—all at least except one to whom, in justice, we must now listen. He was represented even in Berkeley's time. His proposition is, as Berkeley here mentions, that although this insensible matter is not wanted, and although we have not a single reason for thinking it exists, yet as it is not self-contradictory or physically impossible, it might be *wiser* to be prepared for its turning up some day; just as we see the possibility of there being an invisible elephant believed to be standing uncovered and alive, before us now in this well-lighted room, although there is not the slightest sign of the animal nor reason for supposing its existence; and all the more *wise* as some theists tell us that this insensible matter would be very useful, they think, to the Author of nature, in producing the phenomena of the sensible Universe. Some of these zealous writers say it would be 'the summit of human wisdom' not to deny it.

This seems to be very strange reasoning, and should not have been mentioned here, were it not that some very popular scientific men among us have not been ashamed to put it forward as genuine logic. In answer we need only say that every form of the so-called 'matter' that has been hitherto devised, has been admitted by our opponents themselves to be a physical impossibility. Some upon one ground, some upon another, all are agreed upon that point; and we ourselves find it upon all grounds to be so. Some acknowledge that it cannot possibly exist as substratum to anything; others that it cannot exist as originator of Sensible Qualities; others that matter without material qualities would be a physical impossibility, and others that it would be of no use to the Supreme

Cause in producing or grouping the sensible qualities of things. There is, however, a physiologist, we are told, who still thinks that the invisible elephant may really be present. One naturally feels disinclined to meddle with the convictions of a mind in that state of credulity. Nor does it here seem important that we should do so. Even this lingerer in the battlefield does not deny the Phenomenal Nature of the Material Universe. He is only treating of what there is *outside* the Universe, and apparently without much information on the subject.

## CHAPTER II.

## TWO OBJECTIONS ON SO-CALLED 'CHRISTIAN' GROUNDS.

*Thirteenth Objection: In the Scriptures stones and timber mean a sort of Matter without Material Qualities.*

82. Some there are who think, that though the arguments for the real existence of bodies, which are drawn from reason, be allowed not to amount to demonstration, yet, first, the *holy scriptures* are so clear in the point, as will sufficiently convince every good Christian, that bodies do really exist, and are something more than mere ideas; there being in holy writ innumerable facts related, which evidently suppose the reality of timber, and stone, mountains and rivers, and cities, and human bodies. To which I *answer*, that no sort of writings whatever, sacred or profane, which use those and the like words in the *vulgar acceptation*, or so as to have a meaning in them, are in danger of having their truth called in question by our doctrine. That all those things do really exist, that there are bodies, even corporeal substances, when taken *in the vulgar sense*, has been shown to be agreeable to our principles: and the difference betwixt *things* and *ideas*, *realities* and *chimeras*, has been distinctly explained. And I do not think, that either what philosophers call *matter*, or the existence of objects without the mind, is any where mentioned in Scripture.

83. Again, whether there be or be not external things, it is agreed on all hands, that the proper use of words is the marking our conceptions, or things *only as they are known and perceived by us*; whence it plainly follows, that in the tenets we have laid down, there is nothing inconsistent with



the right use and significancy of *language*, and that discourse of what kind soever, so far as it is intelligible, remains undisturbed. But all this seems so manifest, from what hath been set forth in the premises, that it is needless to insist any further on it.

The expression 'external things' here means, as elsewhere, external to the Sensible Universe or to the Spirit.

The so-called 'Christians' of Berkeley's time were as severe and as absurd in their remonstrances against our doctrine as mere theists or any other opponents ever were. They adduced it, we hear, as a grave objection to this denial, of an unknown, insensible, spirit-like something in bodies, that there could be no real body without this concealed ingredient mysteriously lodged in some part of it: and that, therefore, under the name of 'real bodies' the Scripture often mentions this secret substance and bodies constructed upon that principle.

*Fourteenth Objection: Miracles are performed only with Insensible Matter under the name of the Sensible.*

84. But (secondly) it will be urged, that *miracles do*, at least, *lose much of their stress and import by our principles*. What must we think of Moses' rod? Was it not *really* turned into a serpent, or was there only a change of *ideas* in the minds of the spectators? And can it be supposed that our Saviour did no more at the marriage-feast in Cana than impose on the sight, and smell, and taste of the guests, so as to create in them the appearance or idea only of wine? The same may be said of all other miracles; which, in consequence of the foregoing principles, must be looked upon only as so many cheats or illusions of fancy. To this I reply, that the rod was changed into a real serpent, and the water into real wine. That this doth not in the least contradict what I have elsewhere said, will be evident from Secs. 34, 35. But this business of *real* and *imaginary* hath been already so plainly and fully explained, and so often referred to, and the difficulties about it are so easily

answered from what hath gone before, that it were an affront to the reader's understanding to resume the explication of it in this place. I shall only observe, that if at table all who were present should see, and smell, and taste, and drink wine, and find the effects of it, with me there could be no doubt of its reality. So that at bottom the scruple concerning real miracles hath no place at all on ours, but only on the received principles, and, consequently, maketh rather *for* than *against* what hath been said.

These so-called 'Christians' also controverted Berkeley's denial of this insensible, spirit-like entity in bodies upon another ground. They drew attention to the remarkable fact that it was only something wholly imperceptible in the wine,—something beyond the reach of all the senses,—that was changed at the marriage feast in Cana; that it is only something undiscernible in the wafer, that is changed in the Roman Eucharist; and only what was imperceptible in the rod of Moses, that was changed into what was equally imperceptible in the serpent; the merely perceptible or sensible qualities of such things always in each case remaining the same after as before the miracle. These 'Christians' say, therefore, that if we deny the supposed imperceptible ingredient in such things, we deny the Scriptures, because we thus deny even the possibility of miracles.

However much we may listen with respectful amazement to such objections, yet in the nineteenth Century of Christian Principle and Christian Enlightenment it is unnecessary to answer them.



**THE**  
**PRINCIPLES**  
**OF**  
**HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.**

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**PART III.**

**DEFINITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS IN VARIOUS POINTS OF  
PHYSICS AND METAPHYSICS CONNECTED WITH THE  
DISCOVERY THAT THE MATERIAL SUBSTANCE  
IS PHENOMENAL.**



## CHAPTER I.

OF THE VARIOUS KINDS OF PHENOMENAL OBJECTS; ESPECIALLY OF MATERIAL QUALITIES AND THE GROUPS OF THESE, CALLED BODIES.

*An exact Knowledge of Material Nature removes many silly controversies.*

85. Having done with the objections which I endeavoured to propose in the clearest light, and given them all the force and weight I could, we proceed, in the next place, to take a view of our tenets *in their consequences*. Some of these appear at first sight;—as that several difficult and obscure questions, on which abundance of speculation hath been thrown away, are entirely banished from philosophy. Whether corporeal substance can think? whether matter be infinitely divisible? and how it operates on spirit? These, and the like inquiries, have given infinite amusement to philosophers in all ages. But depending on the existence of *matter*, they have no longer any place on our principles. Many other advantages there are, as well with regard to *religion* as the *sciences*, which it is easy for any one to deduce from what has been premised. But this will appear more plainly in the sequel.

When we learn that the material substance is a congeries or group of sensible qualities, what trifling we find it to be to consider that such a substance as this is, could be a Thinking Substance—could be something which is either infinitely small or infinitely large, and could be something which is in itself able TO PRODUCE EFFECTS either on a spirit or on another congeries of qualities. Contrary to what many of our more superficial Opponents have alleged there is, by our doctrine,

no injury whatever done either to Science or Religion, but very much the reverse of injury. All who care about religion will see perhaps with as much astonishment as gratification, that upon the authority of Science, the Supreme Being is far more intimately and constantly occupied about us and our understandings than even the most enlightened of the religious venture always to feel quite sure of; and those who care for Scientific Progress will fully appreciate two among others of the great advantages resulting from the grand discovery in question, viz. (1) the advantage of being able to see that all the objects with which our Existence presents us, are clearly divided into the two kinds, Percipients and Phenomena (Ideas and Spirits), with whose relation to each other we are so intimately acquainted—a *simplicity and completeness of classification that had never previously been attained*; and (2) the great fact that the nature of the Material Substance, being thus shown to be not only knowable but well and easily known, the relation between the human body and the human spirit is thus seen at a glance,—a relation which had previously so long and so hopelessly baffled us that it has been by the learned with the utmost assurance now for many years declared unknowable, and our ignorance of which has incalculably obstructed all physiological as well as psychological research; and, in many corners, does so still.

The two general Classes of objects to which I allude, are now separately treated of by Berkeley in the remainder of the work as his discovery may be supposed to bear upon Physics and Metaphysics; Ideas or Phenomena of all kinds, especially the Sense-phenomena, in the 48 Sections from Sec. 86 to 134, and Percipients or Spirits in the last 22 Sections of the Treatise from Sec. 135 to 156. But it is proper to observe here, both on behalf of the great scientific fact itself which is before us, and on behalf of those who seek to understand it, that although these last 70 Sections of the work (nearly half of the whole) have much in them to interest those who have already completely mastered the doctrine, stated so clearly and tersely in the first two Sections of the Treatise, and explained in the 30 Sections following, yet these last 70 Sections of the work not only do not in themselves assist the reader much to get at the complete reasonableness and *a priori* truth of the doctrine, but, on account of the almost mediæval phraseology so con-

stantly adopted in them, are calculated to throw some confusion over it for those who, before reading them, do not see clearly this *a priori* character of the proposition and its demonstration. The more patient student is therefore strongly recommended to postpone the examination of these last 70 Sections, and indeed, for the same reason, that of the fourteen general Objections (from Sec. 34 to 84), until he has made himself master of the main Proposition itself and the grounds of it, the sufficient explanations of which are all to be found within the limits of the first 33 Sections of the work.

*Advantage of a Doctrine that gives a Precise Meaning to our Words and a Certainty to the Knowledge which we possess already.*

86. From the principles we have laid down it follows human knowledge may naturally be reduced to two heads, that of *ideas* and that of *spirits*. Of each of these I shall treat in order. And first, as to ideas or unthinking things, our knowledge of these hath been very much obscured and confounded, and we have been led into very dangerous errors by supposing a twofold existence of the objects of sense, the one *intelligible*, or in the mind, the other *real* and without the mind: whereby unthinking things are thought to have a natural subsistence of their own, distinct from being perceived by spirits. This which, if I mistake not, hath been shown to be a most groundless and absurd notion, is *the very root of scepticism*; for so long as men thought that real things subsisted without the mind, and that their knowledge was only so far forth *real* as it was conformable to *real things*, it follows they could not be certain that they had any real knowledge at all. For how can it be known that the things which are perceived are conformable to those which are not perceived, or exist without the mind?

87. Colour, figure, motion, extension, and the like, considered only as so many *sensations* in the mind, are perfectly



known, there being nothing in them which is not perceived. But if they are looked on as notes or images, referred to *things* or *archetypes* existing without the mind, then are we involved all in *scepticism*. We see only the appearances, and not the real qualities of things. What may be the extension, figure, or motion of any thing really and absolutely, or in itself, it is impossible for us to know, but only the *proportion* or the *relation* they bear to our senses. Things remaining the same our ideas vary, and which of them, or even whether any of them at all represent the true quality really existing in the thing, it is out of our reach to determine. So that, for aught we know, all we see, hear, and feel, may be only phantom and vain chimera, and not at all agree with the real things existing in *rerum natura*. All this scepticism follows from our supposing a difference between *things* and *ideas*, and that the former have a subsistence without the mind, or unperceived. It were easy to dilate on this subject, and shôw how the arguments urged by sceptics in all ages depend on the supposition of external objects.

88. So long as we attribute a real existence to unthinking things, distinct from their being perceived, it is not only impossible for us to know with evidence the nature of any real unthinking being, but even that it exists. Hence it is that we see philosophers distrust their senses, and doubt of the existence of heaven and earth, of every thing they see or feel, even of their own bodies. And after all their labour and struggle of thought they are forced to own we cannot attain to any self-evident or demonstrative knowledge of the existence of sensible things. But all this doubtfulness, which so bewilders and confounds the mind, and makes *Philosophy* ridiculous in the eyes of the world, vanishes, if we annex a meaning to our words, and do not amuse ourselves with the terms *absolute*, *external*, *exist*, and such like, signifying we know not what. I can as well doubt of my own being as of the being of those things which I actually perceive by sense: it being a manifest contradiction that

any sensible object should be immediately perceived by sight or touch, and, at the same time, have no existence in nature, since the very existence of an unthinking being consists in *being perceived*.

*What Ideas might more properly be termed 'Notions,' and to what else the term 'Notion' or 'Knowledge' applies here.*

89. Nothing seems of more importance towards erecting a firm system of sound and real knowledge, which may be proof against the assaults of scepticism, than to lay the beginning in a distinct explication of what is meant by *thing, reality, existence*: for in vain shall we dispute concerning the real existence of things, or pretend to any knowledge thereof, so long as we have not fixed the meaning of those words. *Thing* or *being* is the most general name of all; it comprehends under it two kinds entirely distinct and heterogeneous, and which have nothing common but the name, to wit, *Spirits* and *Ideas*. The former are *active, indivisible, incorruptible Substances*: the latter are *inert, fleeting, perishable passions, or dependent beings*, which subsist not by themselves, but are supported by, or exist in minds or spiritual substances. We comprehend our own existence by inward feeling or reflection, and that of other spirits by reason. We may be said to have some knowledge or notion of our own Minds, of Spirits and active beings, whereof, in a strict sense, we have not ideas. In like manner we know and have a notion of relations between things or ideas, which relations are distinct from the ideas or things related, inasmuch as the latter may be perceived by us without our perceiving the former. To me it seems that ideas, spirits, and relations, are all, in their respective kinds, the object of human knowledge and subject of discourse, and that the term *idea* would be improperly extended to signify every thing we know or have any notion of.

*In what Senses we say Objects are 'External,'—the least understood, yet most usual expression throughout the whole Work.*

90. Ideas imprinted on the senses are real things, or do really exist; this we do not deny, but we deny they can subsist without the minds which perceive them, or that they are resemblances of any archetypes existing without the mind: since the very being of a sensation or idea consists in being perceived, and an idea can be like nothing but an idea. Again, the *things perceived by sense may be termed external*, with regard to their origin, in that they are not generated from within, by the mind itself, but *imprinted by a spirit DISTINCT FROM that which perceives them*. Sensible objects may likewise be said to be without the mind, in another sense, namely, *when they exist in some other mind*. Thus when I shut my eyes, the things I saw may still exist, but it must be in another mind.

*What we mean by saying that there cannot be an Unperceiving Support, or Substance, for a Sensation or other Sensible Quality.*

91. It were a mistake to think that what is here said derogates in the least from the reality of things. It is acknowledged, on the received principles, that extension, motion, and, in a word, all Sensible Qualities, have need of a support, as not being able to subsist by themselves. But the objects perceived by sense are allowed to be nothing but combinations of those qualities, and, consequently, cannot subsist by themselves. *Thus far it is agreed on all hands*. So that in denying the things perceived by sense, an existence independent of a substance, or support wherein they may exist, we detract nothing from the received opinion of their *reality*, and are guilty of no innovation in that respect. All the difference is, that according to us the unthinking beings perceived by sense have no existence, distinct from

being perceived, and cannot therefore exist in any other substance than those *unextended, indivisible substances, or spirits, which act, and think, and perceive them*; whereas philosophers vulgarly hold, that the sensible qualities exist in an *inert, extended, unperceiving substance*, which they call *matter*, to which they attribute a natural subsistence, exterior to all thinking beings, or distinct from being perceived by any mind whatsoever, even the eternal mind of the Creator, wherein they suppose only ideas of the corporeal substances created by him, if indeed they allow them to be at all created.

*The Ground is here cut away from beneath the Feet of the Materialists or Monists of all Classes.*

92. For as we have shown the doctrine of matter, or corporeal substance, to have been the main pillar and support of scepticism, so likewise upon the same foundation have been raised all the impious schemes of atheism and irreligion. Nay, so great a difficulty hath it been thought, *to conceive matter produced out of nothing*, that the most celebrated among the ancient philosophers, even of these who maintained the being of a God, have thought matter to be uncreated and coeternal with him. How great a friend material substance hath been to Atheists in all ages, were needless to relate. All their monstrous systems have so visible and necessary a dependence on it, that when this corner-stone is once removed, the whole fabric cannot choose but fall to the ground; insomuch that it is no longer worth while to bestow a particular consideration on the absurdities of every wretched sect of Atheists.

93. That impious and profane persons should readily fall in with those systems which favour their inclinations, by deriding Immaterial Substance, and supposing the soul to be divisible and subject to corruption as a body; which exclude all freedom, intelligence, and design from

the formation of things, and instead thereof make a self-existent, stupid, unthinking substance, the root and origin of all beings;—that they should hearken to those who deny a Providence, or inspection of a superior mind over the affairs of the world, attributing the whole series of events either to *blind chance* or *fatal necessity*, arising from the impulse of one body on another;—all this is very natural. And on the other hand, when men of better principles observe the enemies of religion lay so great a stress on *unthinking matter*, and all of them use so much industry and artifice to reduce every thing to it; methinks they should rejoice to see them deprived of their grand support, and driven from that only fortress, without which your Epicureans, Hobbists and the like, have not even the shadow of a pretence, but become the most cheap and easy triumph in the world.

94. The existence of Matter, or Bodies Unperceived, has not only been the main support of Atheists and Fatalists, but on the same principle doth IDOLATRY likewise in all its various forms depend. Did men but consider that the sun, moon, and stars, and every other object of the senses, are only so many sensations in their minds, which have no other existence but barely being perceived, doubtless they would never fall down and worship their own *ideas*; but rather address their homage to that eternal invisible Mind which produces and sustains all things.

95. The same absurd principle, by mingling itself with the articles of our faith, hath occasioned no small difficulties to Christians. For example, about the Resurrection, how many scruples and objections have been raised by Socinians and others? But do not the most plausible of them depend on the supposition, that a body is denominated *the same*, with regard not to the form or *that which is perceived by sense*, but the material substance which remains the same under several forms? Take away this *material substance*, about the identity whereof all the dispute is, and mean by *body* what every plain ordinary person

means by that word, to wit, that which is immediately seen and felt, which is only a combination of Sensible Qualities, or ideas : and then their most unanswerable objections come to nothing.

96. Matter being once expelled out of nature, drags with it so many sceptical and impious notions, such an incredible number of disputes and puzzling questions, which have been thorns in the sides of divines, as well as philosophers, and made so much fruitless work for mankind ; that if the arguments we have produced against it are not found equal to demonstration (as to me they evidently seem), yet I am sure all friends to knowledge, peace, and religion, have reason to wish they were.

*The Obstructions to Science resulting from the Confusion  
connected with Abstract Terms.*

97. Beside the external existence of the objects of perception, another great source of errors and difficulties, with regard to ideal knowledge, is the doctrine of *abstract ideas*, such as it hath been set forth in the Introduction.<sup>1</sup> The plainest things in the world, those we are most intimately acquainted with, and perfectly know, when they are considered in an abstract way, appear strangely difficult and incomprehensible. Time, place, and motion, taken in particular or concrete, are what every body knows ; but having passed through the hands of a Metaphysician, they become too abstract and fine to be apprehended by men of ordinary sense. Bid your servant meet you at such a *time*, in such a *place*, and he shall never stay to deliberate on the meaning of those words : in conceiving that particular time and place, or the motion by which he is to get thither, he finds not the least difficulty. But if *time* be taken, exclusive of all those particular actions and ideas that diversify the day, merely for the *continuation of existence*, or duration in abstract, then it will perhaps gravel even a philosopher to comprehend it.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Art. I.

98. For my own part, whenever I attempt to frame a simple idea of *time* abstracted from the succession of ideas in my mind, which flows uniformly, and is participated by all beings, I am lost and embrangled in inextricable difficulties. I have no notion of it at all, only I hear others say, it is infinitely divisible, and speak of it in such a manner as leads me to entertain odd thoughts of my existence ; since that doctrine lays one under an absolute necessity of thinking, either that he passes away innumerable ages without a thought, or else that he is annihilated every moment of his life : both which seem equally absurd. Time therefore being nothing, *abstracted from the succession of ideas in our minds*, it follows that the duration of any finite spirit must be estimated *by the number of ideas or actions* succeeding each other in that spirit or mind. Hence it is a plain consequence that the soul always thinks : and in truth, whoever shall go about to divide in his thoughts, or abstract the *existence* of a spirit from its *cogitation*, will, I believe, find it no easy task.

99. So likewise when we attempt to abstract *extension* and *motion* from all other qualities, and consider them by themselves, we presently lose sight of them, and run into great extravagancies. All which depend on a two-fold abstraction : first, it is supposed that extension, for example, may be abstracted from all other sensible qualities ; and secondly, that the entity of extension may be abstracted from its being perceived. But whoever shall reflect, and take care to understand what he says, will, if I mistake not, acknowledge that all sensible qualities are alike *sensations*, and alike *real* ; that where the extension is, there is the colour too, to wit, in his mind, and that their archetypes can exist only in some other *mind* : and that the objects of sense are nothing but those sensations combined, blended, or if one may so speak concentered together : none of all which can be supposed to exist unperceived.

100. What it is for a man to be happy or an object good, every one may think he knows. But, to frame an

*abstract* idea of *happiness*, prescinded from all particular pleasure, or of *goodness*, from every thing that is good, this is what few can pretend to. So likewise, a man may be just and virtuous, without having precise ideas of *justice* and *virtue*. The opinion that those and the like words stand for general notions *abstracted from all particular persons and actions*, seems to have rendered morality difficult, and the study thereof of less use to mankind. And, in effect, the doctrine of *abstraction* has not a little contributed towards spoiling the most useful parts of knowledge.

*How this Discovery bears upon some Details of Natural  
Philosophy.*

101. The two great provinces of speculative science, conversant about ideas received from sense and their relations, are *natural philosophy* and *mathematics*; with regard to each of these I shall make some observations. And first, I shall say somewhat of natural philosophy. On this subject it is that the sceptics triumph: all that stock of arguments they produce to depreciate our faculties, and make mankind appear ignorant and low, are drawn principally from this head, to wit, that we are under an invincible blindness as to the *true* and *real* nature of things. This they exaggerate, and love to enlarge on. We are miserably bantered, say they, by our senses, and amused only with the outside and show of things. The real essence, the internal qualities, and constitution of every the meanest object, is hid from our view; something there is in every drop of water, every grain of sand, which it is beyond the power of human understanding to fathom or comprehend. But it is evident from what has been shown, that all this complaint is groundless, and that we are influenced by false principles to that degree as to mistrust our senses, and think we know nothing of those things which we perfectly comprehend.

102. One great inducement to our pronouncing ourselves ignorant of the nature of things, is the current opinion *that*



*every thing includes within itself the cause of its properties*: or that there is in each object an inward essence, which is the source whence its discernible qualities flow, and whereon they depend. Some have pretended to account for appearances by *occult qualities*, but of late they are mostly resolved into *mechanical causes*, to wit, the *figure, motion, weight*, and such like qualities of insensible particles: whereas in truth there is no other Agent or efficient Cause than *Spirit*, it being evident that motion, as well as all other *ideas*, is perfectly inert. See Sec. 25. Hence, to endeavour to explain the production of colours or sounds, by figure, motion, magnitude, and the like, must needs be labour in vain. And accordingly, we see the attempts of that kind are not at all satisfactory. Which may be said, in general, of those instances, wherein one *idea* or *quality* is assigned for the cause of another. I need not say how many hypotheses and speculations are left out, and how much the study of nature is abridged by this doctrine.

103. The great mechanical principle now in vogue is *attraction*. That a stone falls to the earth, or the sea swells towards the moon, may to some appear sufficiently explained thereby. But how are we enlightened by being told this is done by attraction? Is it that the word signifies the manner of the tendency, and that it is by the mutual drawing of bodies, instead of their being impelled or protruded towards each other? but nothing is determined of the manner or action, and it may as truly (for aught we know) be termed *impulse*, or *protrusion*, as *attraction*. Again, the parts of steel we see cohere firmly together, and this also is accounted for by attraction; but in this, as in the other instances, I do not perceive that any thing is signified besides the *effect* itself: for as to the *manner* of the action whereby it is produced, or the *cause* which produces it, these are not so much as aimed at.

104. Indeed, if we take a view of the several phenomena, and compare them together, we may observe some likeness and conformity between them. For example, in the falling

of a stone to the ground, in the rising of the sea towards the moon, in cohesion and crystallization, there is something alike, namely a union or mutual approach of bodies. So that any one of these or the like phenomena, may not seem strange or surprising to a man who hath nicely observed and compared the effects of nature. For that only is thought so which is uncommon, or a thing by itself, and out of the ordinary course of our observation. That bodies should tend towards the centre of the earth, is not thought strange, because it is what we perceive every moment of our lives. But that they should have a like gravitation towards the centre of the moon, may seem odd and unaccountable to most men, because it is discerned only in the tides. But a philosopher, whose thoughts take in a larger compass of nature, having observed a certain similitude of appearances, as well in the heavens as the earth, that argue innumerable bodies to have a mutual tendency towards each other, which he denotes by the general name *attraction*, whatever can be reduced to that, he thinks justly accounted for. Thus he explains the tides by the attraction of the terraqueous globe towards the moon, which to him doth not appear odd or anomalous, but only a particular example of a general rule or law of nature.

105. If therefore we consider the *difference* there is *betwixt natural philosophers and other men*, with regard to their knowledge of the phenomena, we shall find it consists, not in an exacter knowledge of the *efficient cause* that produces them, for that can be no other than the *will of a spirit*, but only in a *greater largeness of comprehension*, whereby *analogies, harmonies, and agreements* are discovered in the works of nature, and the *particular effects explained*, that is reduced to general rules (see Sec. 62), which rules, grounded on the analogy and uniformness observed in the production of natural effects, are most agreeable, and sought after by the mind; for that they extend our prospect beyond what is present, and near to us, and enable us to make *very probable conjectures*, touching things that may have happened at very

great distances of time and place, as well as to predict things to come; which sort of endeavour towards omniscience is much affected by the mind.

106. But we should proceed warily in such things: for we are apt to lay too great a stress on analogies, and to the prejudice of truth, humour that eagerness of the mind, whereby it is carried to extend its knowledge into general theorems. For example, gravitation, or mutual attraction, because it appears in many instances, some are straight-way for pronouncing *universal*; and that to *attract, and be attracted by every other body, is an essential quality inherent in all bodies whatsoever*. Whereas it appears the *fixed stars* have no such tendency towards each other: and so far is that gravitation from being *essential* to bodies, that in some instances a quite contrary principle seems to show itself; as in the perpendicular *growth of plants*, and the *elasticity of the air*. There is nothing *necessary or essential in the case*, but it depends entirely on the will of the *Governing Spirit*, who causes certain bodies to cleave together, or tend towards each other, according to various laws, whilst he keeps others at a fixed distance, and to some he gives a quite contrary tendency to fly asunder, just as he sees convenient.

107. After what has been premised, I think we may lay down *the following conclusions*. *First*, it is plain philosophers amuse themselves in vain, when they inquire for any natural efficient Cause distinct from a *Mind* or *Spirit*. *Secondly*, considering the whole creation ~~is~~ the workmanship of a *wise and good Agent*, it should seem to become philosophers to employ their thoughts (contrary to what some hold) about the FINAL CAUSES OF THINGS: and I must confess, I see no reason why pointing out *the various ends* to which natural things are adapted, and for which they were originally with unspeakable wisdom contrived, should not be thought one good way of accounting for them, and altogether worthy a philosopher. *Thirdly*, from what hath been premised no reason can be drawn, why *the History of nature* should not still

*be studied* and observations and experiments made, which, that they are of use to mankind, and enable us to draw any general conclusions, is not the result of any *immutable habits*, or relations between things themselves, but only of God's goodness and kindness to men in the administration of the world. See Secs. 30, 31. *Fourthly*, by a diligent observation of the phenomena within our view, we may *discover the general laws of nature, and from them deduce the other phenomena*, I do not say *demonstrate*; for all deductions of that kind depend on a supposition that the Author of nature always operates uniformly, and in a constant observance of those rules we take for principles: *which we cannot evidently know*.

108. Those men who frame general rules from the phenomena, and afterwards derive the phenomena from those rules, seem to consider signs rather than causes. A man may well understand natural signs without knowing their *analogy* or being able to *say* by what rule a thing is so or so. And it is very possible to *write improperly through too strict an observance of general grammar rules*: so in arguing from general rules of nature, it is not impossible we may extend the analogy too far, and by that means run into mistakes.

109. As in *reading* other books, a wise man will choose to fix his thoughts on the *sense* and apply it to use, rather than lay them out in *grammatical remarks* on the language: so in perusing the volume of nature, it seems beneath the dignity of the mind to affect an exactness in reducing *each particular phenomenon to general rules*, or showing how it follows from them. We should propose to ourselves nobler views, such as to recreate and exalt the mind, with a prospect of the beauty, *order*, extent, and variety of natural things: hence, by proper inferences, to enlarge our notions of the grandeur, wisdom, and beneficence of the Creator: and lastly, to make the several parts of the creation, so far as in us lies, subservient to the ends they were designed for, God's glory, and the sustentation and comfort of ourselves and fellow

110. The best key for the aforesaid analogy, or natural science, will be easily acknowledged to be a certain celebrated treatise of *mechanics*: in the entrance of which justly admired treatise, time, space, and motion, are distinguished into *absolute* and *relative*, *true* and *apparent*, *mathematical* and *vulgar*: which distinction, as it is at large explained by the author, doth suppose those quantities to have an existence without the mind: and that they are ordinarily conceived with relation to sensible things, to which, nevertheless, in their own nature, they bear no relation at all.

111. As for *time*, as it is there taken in an absolute or abstracted sense, for the duration or perseverance of the existence of things, I have nothing more to add concerning it after what hath been already said on that subject, Secs. 97, 98. For the rest, this celebrated author holds there is an *absolute space*, which, being unperceivable to sense, remains in itself similar and immoveable: and relative space to be the measure thereof, which being moveable, and defined by its situation in respect of sensible bodies, is vulgarly taken for immoveable space. *Place* he defines to be that part of space which is occupied by any body. And according as the space is absolute or relative, so also is the place. *Absolute motion* is said to be the translation of a body from absolute place to absolute place, as relative motion is from one relative place to another. And because the parts of absolute space do not fall under our senses, instead of them we are obliged to use their sensible measures: and so define both place and motion with respect to bodies, which we regard as immoveable. But it is said, in philosophical matters we must *abstract* from our senses, since it may be, that none of those bodies which seem to be quiescent, are truly so: and the same thing which is moved relatively, may be really at rest. As likewise one and the same body may be in relative rest and motion, or even moved with contrary relative motions at the same time, according as its place is variously defined. All which ambiguity is to be found in the apparent motions, but not

at all in the true or absolute, which should therefore be alone regarded in philosophy. And the true, we are told, are distinguished from apparent or relative motions by the following properties. First, in true or absolute motion, all *parts* which preserve the same position with respect to the whole, partake of the motions of the whole. Secondly, the *place* being moved, that which is placed therein is also moved: so that a body moving in a place which is in motion, doth participate the motion of its place. Thirdly, *true motion* is never generated or changed, otherwise than by force impressed on the *body itself*. Fourthly, true motion is always changed by *force impressed* on the *body moved*. Fifthly, in circular motion *barely relative*, there is no centrifugal force, which nevertheless, in that which is true or absolute, is proportional to the quantity of motion.

112. But notwithstanding what hath been said, it doth not appear to me, that there can be any motion other than *relative*: so that to conceive motion, there must be at least conceived two bodies, whereof the distance or position in regard to each other is varied. Hence if there was one only body in being, it could not possibly be moved. This seems evident, in that the idea I have of motion doth necessarily include relation.

113. But though in every motion it be necessary to conceive more bodies than one, yet it may be that one only is moved, namely that on which the force causing the change of distance is impressed, or in other words, that to which the action is applied. For however some may define relative motion, so as to term that body *moved*, which changes its distance from some other body, whether the force or action causing that change were applied to it, or no: yet as relative motion is that which is perceived by sense, and regarded in the ordinary affairs of life, it should seem that every man of common sense knows what it is, as well as the best philosopher: now I ask any one, whether in this sense of motion as he walks along the streets, the stones he passes over may be said to *move* because they change

distance with his feet? To me it seems, that though motion includes a relation of one thing to another, yet *it is not necessary that each term of the relation be denominated from it.* As a man may think of somewhat which doth not think<sup>s</sup>, so a body may be moved to or from another body, which is not therefore itself in motion.

114. As the *place* happens to be variously defined, the motion which is related to it varies. A man in a ship may be said to be quiescent, with relation to the sides of the vessel, and yet move with relation to the land. Or he may move eastward in respect of the one, and westward in respect of the other. In the common affairs of life, men never go beyond the earth to define the place<sup>of</sup> any body : and what is quiescent in respect of that, is accounted *absolutely* to be so. But philosophers, who have a greater extent of thought, and juster notions of the system of things, discover even the earth itself to be moved. In order therefore to fix their notions, they seem to conceive the corporeal world as finite, and the utmost unmoved walls or shell thereof to be the place whereby they estimate true motions. If we sound our own conceptions, I believe we may find all the absolute motion we can frame an idea of, to be at bottom no other than relative motion thus defined. For as hath been already observed, absolute motion exclusive of all external relation is incomprehensible : and to this kind of relative motion, all the above-mentioned properties, causes, and effects ascribed to absolute motion, will, if I mistake not, be found to agree. As to what is said of the centrifugal force, that it doth not at all belong to circular relative motion : I do not see how this follows from the experiment which is brought to prove it. See *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, in *Schol. Def. VIII.* For the water in the vessel, at that time wherein it is said to have the greatest relative circular motion, hath, I think, no motion at all ; as is plain from the foregoing section.

115. For to denominate a body *moved*, it is requisite, *first*, that it change its distance or situation with regard to

some other body : and *secondly*, that the force or action occasioning that change be applied to it. If either of these be wanting, I do not think that agreeable to the sense of mankind, or the propriety of language, a body can be said to be in motion. I grant indeed, that it is possible for us to think a body, which we see change its distance from some other, to be moved, though it have no force applied to it (in which sense there may be apparent motion), but then it is, because the force causing the change of distance is *imagined* by us to be applied or impressed on that body thought to move. Which indeed shows we are capable of mistaking a thing to be in motion which is not, and that is all ; but does not prove that, in the common acceptation of *motion*, a body is moved merely because it changes distance from another ; since as soon as we are undeceived, and find that the moving force was not communicated to it, we no longer hold it to be moved. So on the other hand, when one only body, the parts whereof preserve a given position between themselves, is imagined to exist, some there are who think that it can be moved all manner of ways, though without any change of distance or situation to any other bodies ; which we should not deny, if they meant only that it might have an impressed force, which, *upon the bare creation of other bodies, would produce a motion of some certain quantity* and determination. But that an actual motion (distinct from the impressed force, or power productive of change of place, in case there were bodies present whereby to define it) can exist in such a single body, I must confess I am not able to comprehend.

116. From what hath been said, it follows that *the philosophic consideration of motion doth not imply the being of an absolute space*, distinct from that which is perceived by sense, and related to bodies : which that it cannot exist without the mind, is clear upon the same principles, that demonstrate the like of all other objects of sense. And perhaps, if we inquire narrowly, we shall find we cannot even frame an idea of *pure space exclusive of all body*. This,



I must confess, seems impossible, as being a most abstract idea. When I excite a motion in some part of my body, if it be free or without resistance, I say there is *space*: but if I find a resistance, then I say there is *body*: and in proportion as the resistance to motion is lesser or greater, I say the *space* is more or less *pure*. So that when I speak of pure or empty space, it is not to be supposed, that the word *space* stands for an idea distinct from, or conceivable without body and motion. Though indeed *we are apt to think every noun substantive stands for a distinct idea*, that may be separated from all others: which hath occasioned infinite mistakes. When therefore, supposing all the world to be annihilated besides my own body, I say there still remains *pure space*: thereby nothing else is meant, but only that I conceive it possible for the limbs of my body to be moved on all sides without the least resistance: but if that too were annihilated, then there could be no motion, and consequently no space. Some perhaps may think the sense of seeing doth furnish them with the idea of pure space; but it is plain from what we have elsewhere shown, that the ideas of space and distance are not obtained by that sense. See the Essay concerning Vision.

117. What is here laid down seems to put an end to all those disputes and difficulties which have sprung up amongst the learned concerning the nature of *pure space*. But the chief advantage arising from it is, that we are freed from that dangerous *dilemma*, to which several who have employed their thoughts on this subject imagine themselves reduced, to wit, of thinking either that real space is God, or else that there is something beside God which is eternal, uncreated, infinite, indivisible, immutable. Both which may justly be thought pernicious and absurd notions. It is certain that not a few divines, as well as philosophers of great note, have, from the difficulty they found in conceiving either limits or annihilation of space, concluded it must be *divine*. And some of late have set themselves particularly to show, that the incommunicable

attributes of God agree to it. Which doctrine, how unworthy soever it may seem of the divine nature, yet I do not see how we can get clear of it, so long as we adhere to the received opinions.

*How Berkeley's Discovery bears upon some points of Mathematics.*

118. Hitherto of *natural philosophy*: we come now to make some inquiry concerning that other great branch of speculative knowledge, to wit, *mathematics*. These, how celebrated soever they may be for their clearness and certainty of demonstration, which is hardly any where else to be found, cannot nevertheless be supposed altogether free from mistakes, if in their principles there lurks some secret error, which is common to the professors of those sciences with the rest of mankind. Mathematicians, though they deduce their theorems from a great height of evidence, yet their first principles are limited by the consideration of quantity: and they do not ascend into any inquiry concerning those transcendental maxims, which influence all the particular sciences, each part whereof, mathematics not excepted, doth consequently participate of the errors involved in them. That the principles laid down by mathematicians are true, and their way of deduction from those principles clear and incontestable, we do not deny. But we hold, there may be certain erroneous maxims of greater extent than the object of mathematics, and for that reason not expressly mentioned, though tacitly supposed throughout the whole progress of that science; and that the ill effects of those secret, unexamined errors are diffused through all the branches thereof. To be plain, we suspect the mathematicians are, as well as other men, concerned in the errors arising from the doctrine of abstract general ideas, and the existence of objects without the mind.

119. *Arithmetic* hath been thought to have for its object *abstract ideas of number*. Of which to understand the

properties and mutual habitudes is supposed no mean part of speculative knowledge. The opinion of the pure and intellectual nature of numbers in abstract, hath made them in esteem with those philosophers, who seem to have affected an uncommon fineness and elevation of thought. It hath set a price on the most trifling numerical speculations, which in practice are of no use, but serve only for amusement: and hath therefore so far infected the minds of some, that they have dreamt of mighty *mysteries* involved in numbers, and attempted the explication of natural things by them. But if we inquire into our own thoughts, and consider what hath been premised, we may perhaps entertain a low opinion of those high flights and abstractions, and look on all inquiries about numbers, only as so many *difficiles nugæ*, so far as they are not subservient to practice, and promote the benefit of life

120. *Unity in abstract* we have before considered in Sec. 13, from which and what has been said in the Introduction,<sup>1</sup> it plainly follows *there is not any such idea*. But number being defined a *collection of units*, we may conclude that, if there be no such thing as unity or unit in abstract, there are no ideas of number *in abstract* denoted by the numeral names and figures. The theories therefore in arithmetic, if they are abstracted from the names and figures, as likewise from all use and practice, as well as from the particular things numbered, can be supposed to have nothing at all for their object. Hence we may see, how entirely the science of numbers is subordinate to practice, and how jejune and trifling it becomes, when considered as a matter of mere speculation.

121. However since there may be some, who, deluded by the specious show of discovering abstracted verities, waste their time in arithmetical theorems and problems, which have not any use: it will not be amiss, if we more fully consider, and expose the vanity of that pretence; and this will plainly appear, by taking a view of arithmetic in its infancy, and observing what it was that originally put men

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Art. 1.

on the study of that science, and to what scope they directed it. It is natural to think that at first men, for ease of memory and help of computation, made use of counters, or in writing of single strokes, points, or the like, each whereof was made to signify a unit, that is, some one thing of whatever kind they had occasion to reckon. Afterwards they found out the more compendious ways, of making one character stand in place of several strokes, or points. And lastly, the notation of the Arabians or Indians came into use, wherein, by the repetition of a few characters or figures, and varying the signification of each figure according to the place it obtains, all numbers may be most aptly expressed: which seems to have been done in imitation of language, so that an exact analogy is observed betwixt the notation by figures and names, the nine simple figures answering the nine first numeral names and places in the former, corresponding to denominations in the latter. And agreeably to those conditions of the simple and local value of figures, were contrived methods of finding from the given figures or marks of the parts, what figures, and how placed, are proper to denote the whole, or *vice versâ*. And having found the sought figures, the same rule or analogy being observed throughout, it is easy to read them into words; and so the number becomes perfectly known. For then the number of any particular things is said to be known, when we know the names or figures with their due arrangement that according to the standing analogy belong to them. For these signs being known, we can, by the operations of arithmetic, know the signs of any part of the particular sums signified by them; and thus computing in signs because of the connexion established betwixt them and the distinct multitudes of things, whereof one is taken for a unit, we may be able rightly to sum up, divide, and proportion the things themselves that we intend to number.

122. In *arithmetic* therefore we regard not the *things* but the *signs*, which nevertheless are not regarded for their own sake, but because they *direct us how to act* with relation to

things, and dispose rightly of them. Now agreeably to what we have before observed of words in general (Sec. 19, *Introduct.*<sup>1</sup>), it happens here likewise, that abstract ideas are thought to be signified by numeral names or characters, while they do not suggest *ideas of particular things* to our minds. I shall not at present enter into a more particular dissertation on this subject; but only observe that it is evident from what hath been said, those things which pass for abstract truths and theorems concerning numbers are, in reality, conversant about no object distinct from particular numerable things, except only names and characters; which originally came to be considered on no other account but their being *signs*, or capable to represent aptly whatever particular things men had need to compute. Whence it follows, that to study them for their own sake would be just as wise, and to as good purpose, as if a man, neglecting the true use or original intention and subserviency of language, should spend his time in impertinent criticisms upon words, or reasonings and controversies purely verbal.

123. From numbers we proceed to speak of *extension*, which, considered as relative, is the object of *geometry*. The *infinite* divisibility of *finite* extension, though it is not expressly laid down, either as an axiom or theorem in the elements of that science, yet is throughout the same every where supposed, and thought to have so inseparable and essential a connexion with the principles and demonstrations in geometry, that mathematicians never admit it into doubt, or make the least question of it. And as this notion is the source from whence do spring all those amusing geometrical paradoxes, which have such a direct repugnancy to the plain common sense of mankind, and are admitted with so much reluctance into a mind not yet debauched by learning; so is it the principal occasion of all that nice and extreme subtilty, which renders the study of *mathematics* so difficult and tedious. Hence, if we can make it appear that no finite extension contains innumerable

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Art. 1.

parts, or is infinitely divisible, it follows that we shall at once clear the science of geometry from a great number of difficulties and contradictions, which have ever been esteemed a reproach to human reason, and withal make the attainment thereof a business of much less time and pains than it hitherto hath been.

124. Every particular *finite extension*, which may possibly be the object of our thought, is an *idea* existing only in the mind, and consequently *each part thereof* must be perceived. If, therefore, I cannot perceive innumerable parts in any finite extension that I consider, it is certain that they are not contained in it: but it is evident that I cannot distinguish innumerable parts in any particular line, surface, or solid which I either perceive by sense, or figure to myself in my mind: wherefore I conclude they are not contained in it. Nothing can be plainer to me than that the extensions I have in view are no other than my own ideas, and it is no less plain that I cannot resolve any one of my ideas into an infinite number of other ideas, that is, that they are not infinitely divisible. If by *finite extension* be meant something distinct from a finite idea, I declare I do not know what that is, and so cannot affirm or deny any thing of it. But if the terms *extension*, *parts*, and the like, are taken in any sense conceivable—that is, for ideas—then to say a finite quantity or extension consists of parts infinite in number is so manifest a contradiction that every one at first sight acknowledges it to be so. And it is impossible it should ever gain the assent of any reasonable creature who is not brought to it by gentle and slow degrees, as a converted Gentile to the belief of *transubstantiation*. Ancient and rooted prejudices do often pass into principles: and those propositions which once obtain the force and credit of a *principle*, are not only themselves, but likewise whatever is deducible from them, thought privileged from all examination. And there is no absurdity so gross which by this means the mind of man may not be prepared to swallow.

125. He whose understanding is prepossessed with the *doctrine of abstract general ideas* may be persuaded that, whatever be thought of the ideas of sense, extension in *abstract* is infinitely divisible. And one who thinks the objects of sense exist *without the mind*, will perhaps in virtue thereof be brought to admit that a line but an inch long may contain innumerable parts really existing, though too small to be discerned. These errors are grafted as well in the minds of *geometricians* as of other men, and have a like influence on their reasonings; and it were no difficult thing to show how the arguments from geometry, made use of to support the infinite divisibility of extension, are bottomed on them. At present we shall only observe in general, whence it is that the mathematicians are all so fond and tenacious of this doctrine.

126. It hath been observed in another place that the theorems and demonstrations in geometry are conversant about *universal* ideas. Sect. 15, *Introd.*<sup>1</sup> Where it is explained in what sense this *ought* to be understood, to wit, that the particular lines and figures included in the diagram are supposed to stand for innumerable others of different sizes: or in other words, the geometer considers them abstracting from their magnitude: which doth not imply that he forms an abstract idea, but only that he cares not what the particular magnitude is, whether great or small, but looks on that as a thing indifferent to the demonstration: hence it follows that a line in the scheme, but an inch long, must be spoken of as though it contained ten thousand parts, since it is regarded not in itself, but as it is universal; and it is universal only in its signification, whereby it represents innumerable lines greater than itself, in which may be distinguished ten thousand parts or more, though there may not be above an inch in it. After this manner *the properties of the lines signified are by a very usual figure transferred to the sign*, and thence through mistake thought to appertain to it considered in its own nature.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Art. 1.

127. Because there is no number of parts so great but it is possible there may be a line containing more, the inch-line is said to contain parts more than any assignable number<sup>o</sup>; which is true, not of the inch taken absolutely, but only for the things signified by it. But men not retaining that distinction in their thoughts, slide into a belief that the small particular line described on paper contains in itself parts innumerable. There is no such thing as the ten-thousandth part of an *inch*; but there is of a *mile* or *diameter of the earth*, which may be signified by that inch. When, therefore, I delineate a triangle on paper, and take one side not above an inch, for example, in length, to be the *radius*,<sup>o</sup>this I consider as divided into ten thousand or a hundred thousand parts, or more. For though the ten-thousandth part of that line, considered in itself, is nothing at all, and consequently may be neglected without any error or inconveniency, yet these described lines being only marks standing for greater quantities, whereof it may be the ten-thousandth part is very considerable, it follows that, to prevent notable errors in practice, the *radius* must be taken of ten thousand parts, or more.

128. From what hath been said, the reason is plain why, to the end any theorem may become universal in its use, it is necessary we speak of the lines described on paper as though they contained parts which really they do not. In doing of which, if we examine the matter thoroughly, we shall perhaps discover that we cannot conceive an inch itself as consisting of, or being divisible into, a thousand parts, but only some other line which is far greater than an inch, and represented by it. And that when we say a line is *infinitely divisible*, we must mean a line which is *infinitely great*. What we have here observed seems to be the chief cause why to suppose the infinite divisibility of finite extension hath been thought necessary in geometry.

129. The several *absurdities* and contradictions which flowed from this false principle might, one would think, have been esteemed so many demonstrations against it. But by



I know not what *logic*, it is held that proofs *à posteriori* are not to be admitted against propositions relating to infinity. As though it were not impossible even for an infinite mind to reconcile contradictions. Or as if anything absurd and repugnant could have a necessary connexion with truth, or flow from it. But whoever considers the weakness of this pretence, will think it was contrived on purpose to humour the laziness of the mind, which had rather acquiesce in an indolent scepticism than be at the pains to go through with a severe examination of those principles it hath ever embraced for true.

130 Of late the *speculations about infinites* have run so high, and grown to such strange notions, as have occasioned no small scruples and disputes among the geometers of the present age. Some there are of great note, who, not content with holding that finite lines may be divided into an infinite number of parts, do yet further maintain, that each of those infinitesimals is itself subdivisible into an infinity of other parts, or infinitesimals of a second order, and so on *ad infinitum*. These, I say, assert there are infinitesimals of infinitesimals of infinitesimals, without ever coming to an end. So that according to them an inch doth not barely contain an infinite number of parts, but an infinity of an infinity of an infinity *ad infinitum* of parts. Others there be who hold all orders of infinitesimals below the first to be nothing at all, thinking it with good reason absurd, to imagine there is any positive quantity or part of extension, which, though multiplied infinitely, can ever equal the smallest given extension. And yet on the other hand it seems no less absurd, to think the square, cube, or other power of a positive real root, should itself be nothing at all; which they who hold infinitesimals of the first order, denying all of the subsequent orders, are obliged to maintain.

131. Have we not therefore reason to conclude, that they are *both* in the wrong, and that there is in effect no such thing as parts infinitely small, or an infinite number of parts

contained in any finite quantity? But you will say, that if this doctrine obtains, it will follow that the very *foundations of geometry are destroyed*: and those great men who have raised that science to so astonishing a height, have been all the while building a castle in the air. To this it may be *replied*, that whatever is useful in geometry and promotes the benefit of human life, doth still remain firm and unshaken on our principles. That science, considered as *practical*, will rather receive advantage than any prejudice from what hath been said. But to set this in a due light, may be the subject of a distinct inquiry. For the rest, though it should follow that some of the more intricate and subtle parts of *speculative mathematics* may be pared off without any prejudice to truth; yet I do not see what damage will be thence derived to mankind. On the contrary, it were highly to be wished, that men of great abilities and obstinate application would draw off their thoughts from those amusements, and employ them in the study of such things as lie nearer the concerns of life, or have a more direct influence on the manners.

132. If it be said that several theorems undoubtedly true, are discovered by methods in which *infinitesimals* are made use of, which could never have been, if their existence included a contradiction in it, I *answer*, that upon a thorough examination it will not be found, that in any instance it is necessary to make use of or conceive infinitesimal parts of finite lines, or even quantities less than the *minimum sensible*: nay, it will be evident that it is never done, it being impossible.

133. By what we have premised, it is plain that very numerous and *important errors have taken their rise from those false principles*, which were impugned in the foregoing parts of this treatise. And the opposites of those erroneous tenets at the same time appear to be most fruitful principles, from whence do flow innumerable consequences highly advantageous to true philosophy as well as to religion. Particularly, *Matter or the absolute existence of corporeal objects*,

hath been shown to be that wherein the most avowed and pernicious enemies of knowledge, whether human or divine, have ever placed their chief strength and confidence. And surely, if by distinguishing the real existence of unthinking things from their being perceived, and allowing them a substance of their own out of the minds of spirits, *no one thing is explained in nature*; but on the contrary a great many inexplicable difficulties arise: if *the supposition of matter is barely precarious*, as not being grounded on so much as one single reason: if *its consequences cannot endure the light of examination* and free inquiry, but screen themselves under the dark and general pretence of *infinities being incomprehensible*: if withal the removal of this 'Matter' be not attended with the least evil consequence, if it be not even missed in the world, but every thing as well, nay much easier conceived without it: if lastly, both *sceptics* and *atheists* are for ever silenced upon supposing only Spirits and Ideas, and this scheme of things is perfectly agreeable both to *reason* and *religion*: methinks we may expect it should be admitted and firmly embraced, though it were proposed only as an *hypothesis*, and the existence of the matter had been allowed possible, which yet I think we have evidently demonstrated that it is not.

134. True it is, that in consequence of the foregoing principles, several disputes and speculations, which are esteemed no mean parts of learning, are rejected as useless. But how great a prejudice soever against our notions, this may give to those who have already been deeply engaged, and made large advances in studies of that nature: yet by others, we hope it will not be thought any just ground of dislike to the principles and tenets herein laid down, that they abridge the labour of study, and make human sciences more clear, compendious, and attainable, than they were before.

## CHAPTER II.

OF PERCIPIENT NATURE AND OF THE IMMATERIAL BEINGS  
CALLED SPIRITS OR PERCIPIENTS.

*We know the nature of a Spirit as completely and intimately as we know that of an Idea (or Phenomenon); and no Idea can exist without the condition, aid, support or 'substance,' as it is called, of a Spirit.*

135. Having despatched what we intended to say concerning the knowledge of *ideas*, the method we proposed leads us, in the next place, to treat of *spirits*: with regard to which, perhaps human knowledge is not so deficient as is vulgarly imagined. The great reason that is assigned for our being thought ignorant of the nature of spirits is, our ~~not~~ having an idea of it. But surely it ought not to be looked on as a defect in a human understanding, that it does not perceive the idea of *spirit*, if it is *manifestly impossible there should be any such idea*. And this, if I mistake not, has been demonstrated in Sec. 27; to which I shall here add that, a spirit has been shown to be the only substance or support, wherein the unthinking beings or Ideas can exist: but that this *substance* which supports or perceives ideas should itself be an *idea*, or like an *idea*, is evidently absurd.

*What a new Sense would do for us.*

136. It will perhaps be said, that we want a sense as some have imagined proper to know Substances withal, which if we had, we might know our own soul, as we do a triangle. . To this I answer, that in case we had a new sense

bestowed upon us, we could only receive thereby *some new sensations or ideas of sense*. But I believe nobody will say that what he means by the terms *soul* and *substance*, is *only* some particular sort of idea or sensation. We may therefore infer, that all things duly considered, it is not more reasonable to think our faculties defective, in that they do not furnish us with an idea of spirit or *active thinking substance*, than it would be if we should blame them for not being able to comprehend a *round square*.

*Of objections to the assertion that although each Spirit has itself and its own powers as a sort of image or representation of other Spirits, none of its ideas can ever represent or be the image of another Spirit.*

137. From the opinion that *spirits are to be known after the manner of an idea* or sensation, have risen many absurd and heterodox tenets, and much scepticism about the nature<sup>o</sup> of the soul. It is even probable that this opinion may have produced a doubt in some, whether they had any soul at all distinct from their body, since upon inquiry they could not find *they had an idea of it*. That an *idea*, which is inactive, and the existence whereof consists in being perceived, should be the image or likeness of an agent subsisting by itself, seems to need no other refutation than barely attending to what is meant by those words. But perhaps you will say, that though an *idea* cannot resemble a *spirit*, in its thinking, acting, or subsisting by itself, yet it may in some other respects: and it is not necessary that an idea or image be in all respects like the original.

138. *I answer*, if it does not in those mentioned, it is impossible it should represent it in any other thing. Do but leave out the power of willing, thinking, and perceiving ideas, and there remains nothing else wherein the idea can be like a spirit. For by the word *spirit* we mean only that which thinks, wills, and perceives; this, and this alone, constitutes the signification of that term. If, therefore, it is

impossible that any degree of those powers should be represented in an idea, it is evident there can be no idea of spirit.

139. But it will be objected that if there is no *idea* signified by the terms *soul*, *spirit*, and *substance*, they are wholly insignificant, or have no meaning in them. I answer, those words do mean or signify a real thing, which is neither an idea nor like an idea, but that which perceives ideas, and wills, and reasons about them. What I am myself—that which I denote by the term I—is the same with what is meant by *soul* or *spiritual substance*. But if I should say that *I* was nothing, and that *I* was an idea, nothing could be more evidently absurd than either of these propositions. If it be said that this is only quarrelling at a word, and that since the immediate significations of other names are, by common consent, called *ideas*, no reason can be assigned why that which is signified by the name *spirit* or *soul* may not partake in the same appellation, I answer, all the unthinking objects of the mind agree, in that they are *entirely passive*, and their existence consists only in being perceived: whereas a soul or spirit is an active being, whose existence consists not in being perceived, but in *perceiving ideas* and thinking. It is therefore necessary, in order to prevent equivocation, and confounding natures perfectly disagreeing and unlike, that we distinguish between *spirit* and *idea*. (See Sec. 27.)

140. In a large sense, indeed, we may be said to have an idea, or rather a notion of *spirit*—that is, we understand the meaning of the word, otherwise we could not affirm or deny anything of it. Moreover, as we conceive the ideas that are in the minds of other spirits by means of our own, which we suppose to be *resemblances* of them; so we know other spirits by means of our own soul, which in that sense is the image or idea of them, it having a like respect to other spirits, that blueness or heat by me perceived hath to those ideas perceived by another.

*The Natural Immortality of the soul, or the spirit's freedom from the body's death, seen distinctly to be, for scientific men, an A PRIORI principle of nature, instead of being only an article of faith, as it must ever be for the unscientific.*

141. It must not be supposed that they who assert the natural immortality of the soul are of opinion that it is *absolutely incapable of annihilation*, even by the infinite power of the Creator who first gave it being: but only that it is not liable to be broken or dissolved by the *ordinary laws of nature or motion*. They, indeed, who hold the soul of man to be only a thin vital flame, or system of animal spirits, make it perishing and corruptible as the body, since there is nothing more easily dissipated than such a being, which it is naturally impossible should survive the ruin of the tabernacle wherein it is enclosed. And this notion hath been greedily embraced and cherished by the worst part of mankind, as the most effectual antidote against all impressions of virtue and religion. But it hath been made evident that bodies, of what frame or texture soever, are barely passive ideas in the mind, which is more distant and heterogeneous from them than light is from darkness. We have shown that the soul is indivisible, incorporeal, unextended, and it is consequently *incorruptible*. Nothing can be plainer than that the motions, changes, decays, and dissolutions, which we hourly see befall natural bodies (and which is what we mean by the *course of nature*), cannot possibly affect an *active, simple, uncompounded* substance; such a being therefore is indissoluble by the force of nature—that is to say, *the soul of man is naturally immortal*.

*Further Remarks on the use of the term 'idea,' instead of 'knowledge,' or 'notion.'*

142. After what hath been said, it is I suppose plain, that *our souls are not to be known in the same manner as senseless, inactive objects, or by way of idea. Spirits and Ideas are things*

so wholly different, that when we say *they exist, they are known*, or the like, these words must not be thought to signify any thing common to both natures. There is nothing alike or common in them : and to expect that by any multiplication or enlargement of our faculties we may be enabled to know a spirit as we do a triangle, seems as absurd as if we should hope to *see a sound*. This is inculcated because I imagine it may be of moment towards clearing several important questions, and preventing some very dangerous errors concerning the nature of the soul. We may not, I think, strictly be said to have an idea of an active being, or an action, although we may be said to have a notion of them. I have some knowledge or notion of my mind, and its acts about ideas, inasmuch as I know or understand what is meant by those words. What I know, that I have some notion of. I will not say that the terms *idea* and *notion* may not be used convertibly, if the world will have it so. But yet, it conduceth to clearness and propriety, that we distinguish things very different by different names. It is also to be remarked that, all relations including an act of the mind, we cannot so properly be said to have an idea, but rather a notion of the relations or habitudes between things. But if, in the modern way, the word *idea* is extended to spirits, and relations, and acts, this is, after all, an affair of verbal concern.

*Some special Evils of Abstraction in the case of Metaphysics.*

143. It will not be amiss to add, that the doctrine of *abstract ideas* hath had no small share in rendering those sciences intricate and obscure, which are particularly conversant about spiritual things. Men have imagined they could frame abstract notions of the powers and acts of the mind, and consider them prescinded, as well from the mind or spirit itself, as from their respective objects and effects. Hence a great number of dark and ambiguous terms, presumed to stand for abstract notions, have been intro-



duced into metaphysics and morality, and from these have grown infinite distractions and disputes amongst the learned.

*Figurative language also, and Analogy great obstacles to scientific accuracy, and therefore to scientific progress.*

144. But nothing seems more to have contributed towards engaging men in controversies and mistakes with regard to the nature and operations of the mind, *than the being used to speak of those things in terms borrowed from sensible ideas.* For example, the will is termed the *motion* of the soul: this infuses a belief that the mind of man is as a ball in motion, impelled and determined by the objects of sense, as necessarily as that is by the stroke of a racket. Hence arise endless scruples and errors of dangerous consequence in morality. All which, I doubt not, may be cleared, and truth appear plain, uniform, and consistent, could but philosophers be prevailed on to retire into themselves, and attentively consider their own meaning.

*Just as we know, only by inference, other ideas besides our own, so we know also by inference only, that there are other Spirits existing besides ourselves.*

145. From what hath been said, it is plain that *we cannot know the existence of other spirits otherwise than by their operations, or the ideas by them excited in us.* I perceive several motions, changes, and combinations of ideas, that inform me there are certain particular agents, *like myself*, which accompany them, and concur in their production. Hence the knowledge I have of other spirits is *not immediate*, as is the knowledge of my ideas; but, depending on the intervention of ideas, by me referred to *agents or spirits* distinct from myself, as effects or concomitant signs.

*In this way also (viz. by inference only), we know the existence of the Absolute, or Supreme Being, acting as a Spirit; but except in this its action, entirely unrepresented, even by the human Spirit.*

146. But though there be some things which convince us human agents are concerned in producing them; yet it is evident to every one, that those things which are called the works of nature, that is, the far greater part of the ideas or sensations perceived by us, are not produced by, or dependent on, the wills of men. There is therefore, some other spirit that causes them, since it is repugnant that they should subsist by themselves. See Sec. 29. But if we attentively consider the constant regularity, order, and concatenation of natural things, the surprising magnificence, beauty, and perfection of the larger, and the exquisite contrivance of the smaller parts of the creation, together with the exact harmony and correspondence of the whole, but, above all, the never enough admired laws of pain and pleasure, and the instincts or natural inclinations, appetites, and passions of animals; I say if we consider all these things, and at the same time attend to the meaning and imports of the attributes, one, eternal, infinitely wise, good, and perfect, we shall clearly perceive that they belong to the aforesaid spirit, *who works all in all, and by whom all things consist.*

*But this inference is made with so much evidence of this Spiritual Action as greatly to exceed the evidence that we have of any Being that is merely a Spirit.*

147. Hence it is evident, that God is known as certainly and immediately as any other mind or spirit whatsoever, distinct from ourselves. We may even assert, that the existence of God is far more evidently perceived than the existence of men; because the effects of nature are infinitely

*more numerous and considerable* than those ascribed to human agents. There is not any one mark that denotes a man, or effect produced by him, which doth not more strongly evince the being of that Spirit who is the *Author of nature*. For it is evident that in affecting other persons, the will of man hath no other object than barely the *motion of the limbs of his body*; but that such a motion should be attended by or excite *any idea in the mind of another*, depends wholly on the will of the Creator. He alone it is who, 'upholding all things by the word of his power,' maintains that intercourse between spirits, whereby they are able to perceive the existence of each other. And yet this pure and clear light, which enlightens every one, is itself invisible to the greatest part of mankind.

148. It seems to be a *general pretence of the unthinking herd*, that *they cannot see God*. Could we but see him, say they, as we see a man, we should believe that he is, and believing obey his commands. But, alas, we need only open our eyes to see the sovereign Lord of all things with a more full and clear view, than we do any of our fellow-creatures. Not that I imagine we see God as some will have it by a direct and immediate view, or see corporeal things, not by themselves, but by seeing that which represents them in the essence of God, which doctrine is, I must confess, to me incomprehensible. But I shall explain my meaning. A human spirit or person is not perceived by sense, as not being an idea; when therefore we see the colour, size, figure, and motions of a man, we perceive only certain sensations or ideas excited in our minds: and these being exhibited to our view in sundry distinct collections, serve to mark out unto us the existence of finite and created spirits like ourselves. Hence it is plain, we do not see a man, if by *man* is meant that which lives, moves, perceives, and thinks as we do: but only such a certain collection of ideas, as directs us to think there is a distinct principle of thought and motion like to ourselves, accompanying and represented by it. And after the same manner we see God;

all the difference is, that whereas some one finite and narrow assemblage of ideas denotes a particular human mind, withersoever we direct our view, we do at all times and in all places perceive manifest tokens of the Divinity; every thing we see, hear, feel, or any wise perceive by sense, being a sign or effort of the power of God; as is our perception of those very motions which are produced by men.

149. It is therefore plain, that *nothing can be more evident to any one that is capable of the least reflection, than the existence of God*, or a Spirit who is intimately present to our minds, producing in them all that variety of ideas or sensations, which continually affect us, on whom we have an absolute and entire dependence, in short, *in whom we live, and move, and have our being*. That the discovery of this great truth, which lies so near and obvious to the mind, should be attained to by the reason of so very few, is a sad instance of the stupidity and inattention of men, who, though they are surrounded with such clear manifestations of the Deity, are yet so little affected by them, that they seem as if were blinded with excess of light.

*An ARGUMENTUM AD HOMINEM addressed by Berkeley to the Christians of his own time, who attacked his Discovery on the ground that it brought the Supreme Agent too near them.*

150. But you will say, hath nature no share in the production of natural things, and must they be all ascribed to the immediate and sole operation of God? I answer, if by *nature* is meant only the visible *series* of effects, or sensations imprinted on our minds according to certain fixed and general laws: then it is plain, that nature taken in this sense cannot produce anything at all. But if by *nature* is meant some being distinct from God, as well as from the laws of nature, and things perceived by sense, I must confess that word is to me an empty sound, without any intelligible meaning annexed to it. Nature in this accepta-

tion is a vain *chimera*, introduced by those heathens, who had not just notions of the omnipresence and infinite perfection of God. But it is more unaccountable, that it should be received among Christians professing belief in the Holy Scriptures, which constantly ascribe those effects to the *immediate hand of God*, that heathen philosophers are wont to impute to *nature*. 'The Lord, he causeth the vapours to ascend; he maketh lightnings with rain; he bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures,' Jer. x. 13. 'He turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night,' Amos v. 8. 'He visiteth the earth, and maketh it soft with showers: he blesseth the springing thereof, and crowneth the year with his goodness; so that the pastures are clothed with flocks, and the valleys are covered over with corn.' See Psalm lxxv. But notwithstanding that this is the constant language of Scripture; yet we have I know not what aversion from believing, that God concerns himself so nearly in our affairs. Fain would we suppose him at a great distance off, and substitute some blind unthinking deputy in his stead, though, if we may believe St. Paul, he be 'not far from every one of us.'

*A few Remarks on the presence of 'Defects,' in Nature, physical and moral.*

151. It will, I doubt not, be objected, that the slow and gradual and roundabout methods observed in the production of natural things, do not seem to have for their cause the *immediate* hand of an *Almighty Agent*. Besides, monsters, untimely births, fruits blasted in the blossom, rains falling in desert places, miseries incident to human life, and the like, are so many arguments that the whole frame of nature is not immediately actuated and superintended by a spirit of infinite wisdom and goodness. But the answer to this objection is in a good measure plain from Sec. 62, it being visible, that the aforesaid methods

of nature are absolutely necessary, in order to working by the most simple and general rules, and after a *steady and consistent manner*; which argues both the *wisdom and goodness* of God. Such is the artificial contrivance of this Mighty Machine of Nature, that whilst its motions and various phenomena strike on our senses, the hand which actuates the whole is itself unperceivable to men of flesh and blood. 'Verily,' saith the prophet, 'thou art a God that hidest thyself,' Isaiah xlv. 15. But though God conceal himself from the eyes of the sensual and lazy, who will not be at the least expense of thought; yet to an unbiassed and attentive mind, nothing can be more plainly legible, than the intimate presence of an all-wise Spirit, who fashions, regulates, and sustains the whole system of being. *Secondly*, it is clear from what we have elsewhere observed, that the operating according to general and stated laws, is so necessary *for our guidance in the affairs of life*, and letting us into the secret of nature, that without it, all reach and compass of thought, all human sagacity and design could serve to no manner of purpose: it were even impossible there could be any such faculties or powers in the mind. See Sec. 31. Which one consideration abundantly outbalances whatever particular inconveniences may thence arise.

152. We should *further consider*, that the very blemishes and defects of nature are not without their use, in that they make an agreeable sort of variety, and augment the beauty of the rest of the creation, as shades in a picture serve to set off the brighter and more enlightened parts. We would likewise do well to examine, whether our taxing the waste of seeds and embryos, and accidental destruction of plants and animals, before they come to full maturity, as *an imprudence* in the Author of nature, be not the effect of *prejudice* contracted by our familiarity with impotent and saving mortals. In *man* indeed a thrifty management of those things, which he *cannot procure without much pains* and industry may be esteemed *wisdom*.

But we must not imagine, that the inexplicably fine Machine of an animal or vegetable costs the great Creator any more pains or trouble in its production than a pebble doth: nothing being more evident, than that an omnipotent spirit can indifferently produce every thing by a mere fiat or act of his will. Hence it is plain, that the splendid profusion of natural things should not be interpreted weakness or prodigality in the agent who produces them, but rather be looked on as an argument of the riches of his power.

153. As for the *mixture of pain*, or uneasiness which is in the world, pursuant to the general laws of nature. and the actions of finite imperfect spirits: this, in the state we are in at present, is indispensably necessary to our well-being. But our prospects are *too narrow*: we take, for instance, the idea of *some one particular pain* into our thoughts, and account it *evil*; whereas if we enlarge our view, so as to comprehend the various ends, connexions, and dependencies of things, on what occasions and in what proportions we are affected with pain and pleasure, the nature of human freedom, and the design with which we are put into the world; we shall be forced to acknowledge that those particular things, which considered in themselves appear to be *evil*, have the nature of *good*, when considered as *linked with the whole system of beings*.

154. From what hath been said it will be manifest to any considering person, that it is merely for want of attention and comprehensiveness of mind, that there are any favourers of *atheism* or the *Manichean heresy* to be found. Little and unreflecting souls may indeed burlesque the work of Providence, the beauty and order whereof they have not capacity, or will not be at the pains, to comprehend. But those who are masters of any justness and extent of thought, and are withal used to reflect, can never sufficiently \* admire the divine traces of wisdom and goodness that shine throughout the economy of nature. But what truth is there which shineth so strongly on the mind, that by an

aversion of thought, a wilful shutting of the eyes, we may not escape seeing it? Is it therefore to be wondered at, if the generality of men, who are ever intent on business or pleasure, and little used to fix or open the eye of their mind, should not have all that conviction and evidence of the being of God, which might be expected in reasonable creatures?

*A more accurate knowledge in Physical Science would make men happier. To aid (by the clear statement of one grand Physical Discovery) in bringing about this greater accuracy and greater happiness has been the object of this Treatise on*  
 'THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.'

155. We should rather wonder, that men can to be found so stupid as to neglect, than that neglecting they should be unconvinced of such an evident and momentous truth. And yet it is to be feared that too many of parts and leisure, who live in Christian countries, are merely through a supine and dreadful negligence sunk into a sort of *semi-atheism*. Since it is downright impossible, that a soul pierced and enlightened with a thorough sense of the omnipresence, holiness, and justice of that Almighty Spirit, should persist in a remorseless violation of his laws. We ought, therefore, earnestly to meditate and dwell on those important points; that so we may attain conviction without all scruple, that 'the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good; that he is with us and keepeth us in all places whither we go, and giveth us bread to eat, and raiment to put on;' that he is present and conscious to our innermost thoughts; and that we have a most absolute and immediate dependence on him. A clear view of which great truths cannot choose but fill our heart with an awful  
 • circumspection and holy fear, which is the strongest incentive to *virtue*, and the best guard against *vice*.

156. For after all, what deserves the first place in our studies, is the consideration of God, and our duty; which to



promote, as it was the main drift and design of my labours, so shall I esteem them altogether useless and ineffectual if by what I have said I cannot inspire my readers with a pious Sense of the PRESENCE of God: and having shown the falseness or vanity of those barren speculations, which make the chief employment of learned men, the better dispose them to reverence and embrace the salutary truths of the Gospel, which to know and to practise is the highest perfection of human nature.

END OF PART III.

## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX No. 1.

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# ON THE USE AND ABUSE IN SCIENCE OF ABSTRACT TERMS AND ABSTRACT IDEAS.

BEING

BERKELEY'S OWN INTRODUCTION TO HIS TREATISE  
ON THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

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**I.** PHILOSOPHY being nothing else but *the study of wisdom and truth*, it may with reason be expected that those who have spent most time and pains in it should enjoy a greater calm and serenity of mind, a greater clearness and evidence of knowledge, and be less disturbed with doubts and difficulties, than other men. Yet so it is, we see the illiterate bulk of mankind, that walk the high road of plain, common sense, and are governed by the dictates of nature, for the most part easy and undisturbed. To them nothing *that is familiar* appears unaccountable or difficult to comprehend. They complain not of any want of evidence in their senses, and are out of all danger of becoming *sceptics*. But no sooner do we depart from sense and instinct to follow the light of a superior principle, to reason, meditate, and reflect on the nature of things, but a thousand scruples spring up in our minds concerning those things which before we seemed fully to comprehend. Prejudices and errors of sense do from all parts discover themselves to our view; and endeavouring to correct these by reason, we are insensibly drawn into uncouth paradoxes, difficulties, and

inconsistencies, which multiply and grow upon us as we advance in speculation; till at length, having wandered through many intricate mazes, we find ourselves just where we were, or, which is worse, sit down in a foflorn scepticism.

2. The cause of this is thought to be the obscurity of things, or the natural weakness and imperfection of our understandings. It is said the faculties we have are few, and those designed by nature for the *support*, comfort, and pleasure of life, and not to penetrate into the *inward essence* and constitution of things. Besides, the mind of man being finite, when it treats of things which partake of infinity, it is not to be wondered at if it run into absurdities and contradictions, out of which it is impossible it should ever extricate itself, it being of the nature of infinite not to be comprehended by that which is finite.

3. But perhaps we may be too partial to ourselves in placing the fault originally in our faculties, and not rather in the wrong use we make of them. *It is a hard thing to suppose that right deductions from true principles should ever end in consequences which cannot be maintained or made consistent.* We should believe that God has dealt more bountifully with the sons of men than to give them a strong desire for that knowledge which he had placed quite out of their reach. This were not agreeable to the wonted indulgent methods of Providence, which, whatever appetites it may have implanted in the creatures, doth usually furnish them with such means as, if rightly made use of, will not fail to satisfy them. Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that the far greater part, if not all of those difficulties which have hitherto amused philosophers, and blocked up the way to knowledge, are entirely owing to ourselves. That we have first raised a dust, and then complain, we cannot see.

4. My purpose, therefore, is to try if I can discover what those principles are which have introduced all that doubtfulness and uncertainty, those absurdities and con-

traditions into the several sects of philosophy; insomuch that the wisest men have thought our ignorance incurable, conceiving it to arise from the natural dulness and limitation of our faculties. And surely it is a work well deserving our pains, to make a strict inquiry concerning the first principles of human knowledge, to sift and examine them on all sides: especially since there may be some grounds to suspect that those lets and difficulties which stay and embarrass the mind in its search after truth, do not spring from any darkness and intricacy in the objects, or natural defect in the understanding, so much as from false principles which have been insisted on and might have been avoided.

5. How difficult and discouraging soever this attempt may seem, when I consider how many great and extraordinary men have gone before me in the same designs: yet I am not without some hopes, upon the consideration that the largest views are not always the clearest, and that he who is shortsighted will be obliged to draw the object nearer, and may, perhaps, by a close and narrow survey, discern that which had escaped far better eyes.

6. In order to prepare the mind of the reader for the easier conceiving what follows, it is proper to premise somewhat, by way of introduction, concerning the nature and abuse of language. But the unravelling this matter leads me in some measure to anticipate my design, by taking notice of what seems to have had a chief part in rendering speculation intricate and perplexed, and to have occasioned innumerable errors and difficulties in almost all parts of knowledge. And that is, the opinion that the mind hath a power of framing *abstract ideas* or notions of things. He who is not a perfect stranger to the writings and disputes of philosophers, must needs acknowledge that no small part of them are spent about abstract ideas. These are, in a more especial manner, thought to be the object of those sciences which go by the name of *logic* and *metaphysics*, and of all that which passes under the notion of

the most abstracted and sublime learning, in all which one shall scarce find any question handled in such a manner as does not suppose their existence in the mind, and that it is well acquainted with them.

7. It is agreed on all hands that the qualities or modes of things do never *really exist each of them apart by itself*, and separated from all others, but are mixed, as it were, and blended together, several in the same object. But we are told, the mind being able to consider each quality singly, or abstracted from those other qualities with which it is united, does by that means frame to itself abstract ideas. For example, there is perceived by sight an object extended, coloured, and moved: this mixed or compound idea the mind resolving into its simple, constituent parts, and viewing each by itself, exclusive of the rest, does frame the abstract ideas of extension, colour, and motion. Not that it is possible for colour or motion to exist without extension: but only that the mind can frame to itself *by abstraction* the idea of colour exclusive of extension, and of motion exclusive of both colour and extension.

8. Again, the mind having observed that in the particular extensions perceived by sense there is something *common* and alike *in all*, and some other things peculiar, as this or that figure or magnitude, which distinguish them one from another; it considers apart or singles out by itself that which is common, making thereof a most abstract idea of extension, which is neither line, surface, nor solid, nor has any figure or magnitude, but is an idea entirely prescinded from all these. So likewise the mind, by leaving out of the particular colours perceived by sense that which distinguishes them one from another, and retaining that only which is *common to all*, makes an idea of colour in abstract which is neither red, nor blue, nor white, nor any other determinate colour. And in like manner, by considering motion abstractedly, not only from the body moved, but likewise from the figure it describes, and all particular directions and velocities, the abstract idea of

motion is framed; which equally corresponds to all particular motions whatsoever that may be perceived by sense.

9.<sup>o</sup> And as the mind frames to itself abstract ideas of qualities or *modes*, so does it, by the same prescision or mental separation, attain abstract ideas of the more compounded *beings* which include several co-existent qualities. For example, the mind having observed that Peter, James, and John resemble each other in certain common agreements of shape and other qualities, leaves out of the complex or compounded idea it has of Peter, James, and any other particular man, that which is peculiar to each, retaining only what is common to all; and so makes an abstract idea wherein all the particulars equally partake, abstracting entire'y from and cutting off all those circumstances and differences which might determine it to any particular existence. And after this manner it is said we come by the abstract idea of *man*, or, if you please, humanity or human nature; wherein it is true there is included colour, because there is no man but has some colour, but then it can be neither white, nor black, nor any particular colour; because there is no one particular colour wherein all men partake. So likewise there is included stature, but then it is neither tall stature nor low stature, nor yet middle stature, but something abstracted from all these. And so of the rest. Moreover, there being a great variety of other creatures that partake in some parts, but not all, of the complex idea of *man*, the mind leaving out those parts which are peculiar to men, and retaining those only which are common to all the living creatures, frameth the idea of *animal*, which abstracts not only from all particular men, but also all birds, beasts, fishes, and insects. The constituent parts of the abstract idea of *animal* are body, life, sense, and spontaneous motion. By *body* is meant body without any particular shape or figure, there being no one shape or figure common to all animals, without covering, either of hair or feathers, or scales, &c.,



nor yet naked; hair, feathers, scales, and nakedness being the distinguishing properties of particular animals, and for that reason left out of the *abstract idea*. Upon the same account the spontaneous motion must be neither walking, nor flying, nor creeping; it is nevertheless a motion, but what that motion is it is not easy to conceive.

10. Whether others have this wonderful faculty of *abstracting their ideas* they best can tell: for myself, I find indeed I have a faculty of imagining, or representing to myself the ideas of those particular things I have perceived, and of variously compounding and dividing them. I can imagine a man with two heads, or the upper parts of a man joined to the body of a horse. I can consider the hand, the eye, the nose, each by itself abstracted or separated from the rest of the body. But then, whatever hand or eye I imagine, it must have some particular shape and colour. Likewise, the idea of man that I frame to myself must be either of a white, or a black, or a tawny, a straight or a crooked, a tall, or a low, or a middle-sized man. I cannot by any effort of thought conceive the abstract idea above described. And it is equally impossible for me to form the abstract idea of motion distinct from the body moving, and which is neither swift nor slow, curvilinear nor rectilinear; and the like may be said of all other abstract general ideas whatsoever. To be plain, I own myself able to abstract *in one sense*, as when I consider some particular parts or qualities separated from others, with which, though they are united in some object, yet it is possible they may really exist without them. But I deny that I can abstract one from another, or conceive separately those qualities which it is impossible should exist so separated; or that I can frame a general notion by abstracting from particulars in the manner aforesaid. Which two last are the proper acceptations of *abstraction*. And there are grounds to think most men will acknowledge themselves to be in my case. The generality of men which are simple and illiterate never pretend to *abstract notions*.

It is said they are difficult, and not to be attained without pains and study. We may therefore reasonably conclude that, if such there be, they are confined only to the learned.

11. I proceed to examine what can be alleged in *defence of the doctrine of abstraction*, and try if I can discover what it is that inclines the men of speculation to embrace an opinion so remote from common sense as that seems to be. There has been a late deservedly esteemed philosopher, who, no doubt, has given it very much countenance by seeming to think the having abstract ideas is what puts the widest difference in point of understanding betwixt man and beast. 'The having of general ideas,' saith he, 'is that which puts a perfect distinction betwixt man and brutes, and is an excellency which the faculties of brutes do by no means attain unto. For it is evident we observe no footsteps in them of making use of general signs for universal ideas; from which we have reason to imagine that they have not the faculty of *abstracting*, or making general ideas, since they have no use of words or any other general signs.' And a little after: 'Therefore, I think, we may suppose that it is in this that the species of brutes are discriminated from men, and it is that proper difference wherein they are wholly separated, and which at last widens to so wide a distance. For if they have any ideas at all, and are not bare machines (as some would have them), we cannot deny them to have some reason. It seems as evident to me that they do some of them in certain instances reason as that they have sense, but it is only in particular ideas, just as they receive them from their senses. They are the best of them tied up within those narrow bounds, and have not (as I think) the faculty to enlarge them by any kind of *abstraction*.' Essay on Hum. Underst., b. ii. ch. xi. secs. 10, 11. I readily agree with this learned author, that the faculties of brutes can by no means attain to *abstraction*. But then if this be made the distinguishing property of that sort of animals, I fear a great many of those that pass for men must be reckoned into their number. The reason that is

here assigned why we have no grounds to think brutes have abstract general ideas, is that we observe in them no use of words or any other general signs; which is built on this supposition—to wit, that the making use of words implies the having general ideas. From which it follows, that men who use language are able to *abstract* or *generalize* their ideas. That this is the sense and arguing of the author will further appear by his answering the question he in another place puts. ‘Since all things that exist are only particulars, how come we by general terms?’ His answer is, ‘Words become general by being made the signs of general ideas.’ Essay on Hum. Underst., b. iii. ch. iii. sec. 6. But it seems that a word becomes general by being made the sign, not of an *abstract* general idea, but of several particular ideas, any one of which it indifferently suggests to the mind. For example, when it is said *the change of motion is proportional to the impressed force*, or that *whatever has extension is divisible*; these propositions are to be understood of motion and extension in general, and nevertheless it will not follow that they suggest to my thoughts an idea of motion without a body moved, or any determinate direction and velocity, or that I must conceive an abstract general idea of extension, which is neither line, surface, nor solid, neither great nor small, black, white, nor red, nor of any other determinate colour. It is only implied that whatever motion I consider, whether it be swift or slow, perpendicular, horizontal, or oblique, or in whatever object, the axiom concerning it holds equally true. As does the other of every particular extension, it matters not whether line, surface, or solid, whether of this or that magnitude or figure.

12. By observing how ideas become general, we may the better judge how words are made so. And here it is to be noted that I do not deny absolutely there are general ideas but only that there are any *abstract general ideas*: for in the passages above quoted, wherein there is mention of general ideas, it is always supposed that they are formed by *abstraction*, after the manner set forth in Secs. 8 and 9. Now

if we will annex a meaning to our words, and speak only of what we can conceive, I believe we shall acknowledge that an idea which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the *same sort*. To make this plain by an example, suppose a geometrician is demonstrating the method of cutting a line in two equal parts. He draws, for instance, a black line of an inch in length; this, which in itself is a particular line, is nevertheless with regard to its signification general, since, as it is there used, it represents all particular lines whatsoever; so that what is demonstrated of it is demonstrated of all lines, or, in other words, of a line in general. And as that particular line becomes general, by being made a sign, so the name *line*, which taken absolutely is *particular*, by being a sign is made *general*. And as the former owes its generality, not to its being the sign of an abstract or general line, but of *all particular* right lines that may possibly exist; so the latter must be thought to derive its generality from the same cause, namely, the *various particular* lines which it indifferently denotes.

13. To give the reader a yet clearer view of the nature of abstract ideas, and the uses they are thought necessary to, I shall add one more passage out of the Essay on Human Understanding, which is as follows. ‘*Abstract ideas* are not so obvious or easy to children or the yet unexercised mind as particular ones. If they seem so to grown men, it is only because by constant and familiar use they are made so. For when we nicely reflect upon them, we shall find that general ideas are fictions and contrivances of the mind, that carry difficulty with them, and do not so easily offer themselves as we are apt to imagine. For example, does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle? (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult;) for it must be neither oblique nor rectangle, neither equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenon, but *all and none* of these at once. In effect, it is something

imperfect that cannot exist, an idea wherein some parts of several different and *inconsistent* ideas are put together. It is true the mind in this imperfect state has need of such ideas, and makes all the haste to them it can, for the *conveniency of communication and enlargement of knowledge*, to both of which it is naturally very much inclined. But yet one has reason to expect such ideas are marks of our imperfection. At least this is enough to show that the most abstract and general ideas are not those that the mind is first and most easily acquainted with, nor such as its earliest knowledge is conversant about.' Book iv. ch. vii. sec. 9. If any man has the faculty of framing in his mind such an idea of a triangle as is here described, it is in vain to pretend to dispute him out of it, nor would I go about it. All I desire is, that the reader would fully and certainly inform himself whether he has such an idea or no. And this, methinks, can be no hard task for any one to perform. What more easy than for any one to look a little into his own thoughts, and there try whether he has, or can attain to have, an idea that shall correspond with the description that is here given of the general idea of a triangle, which is, *neither oblique, nor rectangle, equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once?*

14. Much is here said of the difficulty that abstract ideas carry with them, and the pains and skill requisite to the forming them. And it is on all hands agreed that there is need of great toil and labour of the mind; to emancipate our thoughts from particular objects, and raise them to those sublime speculations that are conversant about abstract ideas. From all which the natural consequence should seem to be, that so *difficult* a thing as the forming abstract ideas was not necessary for *communication*, which is so *easy* and familiar to *all sorts of men*. But we are told, if they seem obvious and easy to grown men, *it is only because by constant and familiar use they are made so*. Now I would fain know at what time it is men are employed in surmounting that difficulty, and furnishing themselves with

those necessary helps for discourse. It cannot be when they are grown up, for then it seems they are not conscious of any such painstaking ; it remains therefore to be the business of their childhood. And surely, the great and multiplied labour of framing abstract notions will be found a hard task for that tender age. Is it not a hard thing to imagine that a couple of children cannot prate together of their sugar-plums, and rattles, and the rest of their little trinkets, till they have first tacked together numberless inconsistencies, and so framed in their minds *abstract general ideas*, and annexed them to every common name they make use of ?

15. Nor do I think them a whit more needful for the *enlargement of knowledge* than for *communication*. It is, I know, a point much insisted on, that all knowledge and demonstration are about universal notions, to which I fully agree : but then it doth not appear to me that those notions are formed by *abstraction* in the manner premised ; *universality*, so far as I can comprehend, not consisting in the absolute, *positive* nature or conception of any thing, but in the *relation* it bears to the particulars signified or represented by it : by virtue whereof it is that things, names, or notions, being in their own nature *particular*, are rendered *universal*. Thus when I demonstrate any proposition concerning triangles, it is to be supposed that I have in view the universal idea of a triangle ; which ought not to be understood as if I could frame an idea of a triangle which was neither equilateral, nor scalenon, nor equicrural. But only that the particular triangle I consider, whether of this or that sort it matters not, doth equally stand for and represent all rectilinear triangles whatsoever, and is, in that sense, *universal*. All which seems very plain, and not to include any difficulty in it.

16. But here it will be demanded, *how can we know any proposition to be true of all particular triangles, except we have first seen it demonstrated of the abstract idea of a triangle which equally agrees to all ?* For because a property

may be demonstrated to agree to some one particular triangle, it will not thence follow that it equally belongs to any other triangle, which in all respects is not the same with it. For example, having demonstrated that the three angles of an isosceles rectangular triangle are equal to two right ones, I cannot therefore conclude this affection agrees to all other triangles, which have neither a right angle, nor two equal sides. It seems therefore that, to be certain this proposition is universally true, we must either make a particular demonstration for every particular triangle, which is impossible, or once for all demonstrate it of the *abstract idea of a triangle*, in which all the particulars do indifferently partake, and by which they are all equally represented. To which I answer, that though the idea I have in view whilst I make the demonstration, be, for instance, that of an isosceles rectangular triangle, whose sides are of a determinate length, I may nevertheless be certain it extends to all other rectilinear triangles, of what sort or bigness soever. And that, because neither the right angle, nor the equality, nor the determinate length of the sides, are at all concerned in the demonstration. It is true, the diagram I have in view includes all these particulars, but then there is not the least mention made of them in the proof of the proposition. It is not said, the three angles are equal to two right ones, because one of them is a right angle, or because the sides comprehending it are of the same length. Which sufficiently shows that the right angle might have been oblique, and the sides unequal, and for all that the demonstration have held good. And for this reason it is, that I conclude that to be true of any obliquangular or scalenon, which I had demonstrated of a particular right-angled equicrural triangle; and not because I demonstrated the proposition of the abstract idea of a triangle. And here it must be acknowledged, that a man may consider a figure merely as triangular without attending to the particular qualities of the angles, or relations of the sides. So far he may abstract: but this will never prove that he can frame

an abstract general inconsistent idea of a triangle. In like manner we may consider Peter so far forth as man, or so far forth as animal, without framing the forementioned abstract idea, either of man or of animal, inasmuch as all that is perceived is not considered.

17. It were an endless, as well as a useless thing, to trace the *schoolmen*, those great masters of abstraction, through all the manifold, inextricable labyrinths of error and dispute, which their doctrine of abstract natures and notions seems to have led them into. What bickerings and controversies, and what a learned dust have been raised about those matters, and what mighty advantage hath been from thence derived to mankind, are things at this day too clearly known to need being insisted on. And it had been well if the ill effects of that doctrine were confined to those only who make the most avowed profession of it. When men consider the great pains, industry, and parts, that have, for so many ages, been laid out on the cultivation and advancement of the sciences, and that notwithstanding all this, the far greater part of them remain full of darkness and uncertainty, and disputes that are like never to have an end, and even those that are thought to be supported by the most clear and cogent demonstrations, contain in them paradoxes, which are perfectly irreconcilable to the understandings of men, and that, taking all together, a small portion of them, doth supply any real benefit to mankind, otherwise than by being an innocent diversion and amusement: I say the consideration of all this is apt to throw them into a despondency, and perfect contempt of all study. But this may perhaps cease, upon a view of the false principles that have obtained in the world, amongst all which there is none, methinks, hath a more wide influence over the thoughts of speculative men, than this of abstract general ideas.

18. I come now to consider the *source of this prevailing notion*, and that seems to me to be *language*. And surely nothing of less extent than reason itself could have been the source of an opinion so universally received. The truth



of this appears as from other reasons, so also from the plain confession of the ablest patrons of abstract ideas, who acknowledge that they are made in order to naming; from which it is a clear consequence, that if there had been no such thing as speech or universal signs, there never had been any thought of abstraction. See book iii. ch. vi. sec. 39, and elsewhere, of the Essay on Human Understanding. Let us therefore examine the manner wherein words have contributed to the origin of that mistake. First, then, it is thought that every name hath, or ought to have, *one only* precise and settled signification, which inclines men to think there are certain *abstract, determinate ideas*, which constitute the true and only immediate signification of each general name. And that it is by the mediation of these abstract ideas, that a general name comes to signify any particular thing. Whereas, in truth, there is no such thing as one precise and definite signification annexed to any general name, they all signifying indifferently a great number of particular ideas. All which doth evidently follow from what has been already said, and will clearly appear to any one by a little reflection. To this it will be *objected*, that every name that has a definition, is thereby restrained to one certain signification. For example, a *triangle* is defined to be a *plain surface comprehended by three right lines*, by which that name is limited to denote one certain idea and no other. To which I answer, that in the definition it is not said whether the surface be great or small, black or white, nor whether the sides are long or short, equal or unequal, nor with what angles they are inclined to each other; in all which there may be great variety, and consequently there is *no one settled idea* which limits the signification of the word *triangle*. It is one thing for to keep a name constantly to the same definition, and another to make it stand every where for the same idea: the one is necessary, the other useless and impracticable.

19. But to give a further account how *words* came to produce the doctrine of abstract ideas, it must be observed

that it is a received opinion, that language has *no other end* but the communicating our ideas, and that every significant name stands for an idea. This being so, and it being withal certain, that names, which yet are not thought altogether insignificant, do not always mark out *particular* conceivable ideas, it is straightway concluded that *they stand for abstract notions*. That there are many names in use amongst speculative men, which do not always suggest to others determinate particular ideas is what nobody will deny. And a little attention will discover, that it is not necessary, even in the strictest reasonings, significant names which stand for ideas should, every time they are used, excite in the understanding the ideas they are made to stand for: in reading and discoursing, names being, for the most part, used as letters are in *algebra*, in which, though a particular quantity be marked by each letter, yet to proceed right it is not requisite that in every step each letter suggest to your thoughts that particular quantity it was appointed to stand for.

20. Besides, the communicating of ideas marked by words is not the chief and only end of language, as is commonly supposed. There are other ends, as the raising of some passion, the exciting to, or deterring from an action, the putting the mind in some particular disposition; to which the former is, in many cases, barely subservient, and sometimes entirely omitted, when these can be obtained without it, as I think doth not unfrequently happen in the familiar use of language. I entreat the reader to reflect with himself, and see if it doth not often happen, either in hearing or reading a discourse, that the passions of fear, love, hatred, admiration, disdain, and the like, arise immediately in his mind upon the perception of certain words, without any ideas coming between. At first, indeed, the words might have occasioned ideas that were fit to produce those emotions; but, if I mistake not, it will be found that when language is once grown familiar, the hearing of the sounds or sight of the characters is oft immediately attended with

those passions, which at first were wont to be produced by the intervention of ideas that are now quite omitted. May we not, for example, be affected with the promise of a *good thing*, though we have not an idea of what it is? Or is not the being threatened with danger sufficient to excite a dread, though we think not of any particular evil likely to befall us, nor yet frame to ourselves an idea of danger in abstract? If any one shall join ever so little reflection of his own to what has been said, I believe it will evidently appear to him, that general names are often used in the propriety of language without the speaker's designing them for marks of ideas in his own, which he would have them raise in the mind of the hearer. Even proper names themselves do not seem always spoken with a design to bring into our view the ideas of those individuals that are supposed to be marked by them. For example, when a schoolman tells me 'Aristotle hath said it,' all I conceive he means by it, is to dispose me to embrace his opinion with the deference and submission which custom has annexed to that name. And this effect may be so instantly produced in the minds of those who are accustomed to resign their judgment to the authority of that philosopher, as it is impossible any idea either of his person, writings, or reputation, should go before. Innumerable examples of this kind may be given, but why should I insist on those things which every one's experience will, I doubt not, plentifully suggest unto him?

21. We have, I think, shown the impossibility of *abstract ideas*. We have considered what has been said for them by their ablest patrons; and endeavoured to show they are of no use for those ends to which they are thought necessary. And, lastly, we have traced them to the source from whence they flow, which appears to be language. It cannot be denied that words are of excellent use; in that, by their means, all that stock of knowledge, which has been purchased by the joint labours of inquisitive men in all ages and nations, may be drawn into the view and made the possession of one single person. But at the same time it must be

owned that most parts of knowledge have been strangely perplexed and darkened by the abuse of words, and general ways of speech wherein they are delivered. Since, therefore, words are so apt to impose on the understanding, whatever ideas I consider I shall endeavour to take them bare and naked into my view, keeping out of my thoughts, so far as I am able, those names which long and constant use hath so strictly united with them; from which I may expect to derive the following advantages:—

22. *First*, I shall be sure to get clear of all controversies *purely verbal*; the springing up of which weeds in almost all the sciences has been a main hindrance to the growth of true and sound knowledge. *Secondly*, this seems to be a sure way to extricate myself out of that fine and subtle net of *abstract ideas* which has so miserably perplexed and entangled the minds of men, and that with this peculiar circumstance, that by how much the finer and more curious was the wit of any man, by so much the deeper was he like to be ensnared and faster held therein. *Thirdly*, so long as I confine my thoughts to my own ideas divested of words, I do not see how I can be easily mistaken. The objects I consider, I clearly and adequately know. I cannot be deceived in thinking I have an idea which I have not. It is not possible for me to imagine that any of my own ideas are like or unlike that are not truly so. To discern the agreements or disagreements that are between my ideas, to see what ideas are included in any compound idea, and what not, there is nothing more requisite than an attentive perception of what passes in my own understanding.

23. But the attainment of all these advantages doth presuppose an entire deliverance from the deception of words, which I dare hardly promise myself; so difficult a thing it is to dissolve a union so early begun, and confirmed by so long a habit as that betwixt words and ideas. Which difficulty seems to have been very much increased by the doctrine of abstraction. For so long as men thought

abstract ideas were annexed to their words, it doth not seem strange that they should use words for ideas: it being found an impracticable thing to lay aside the word and retain the abstract idea in the mind, which in itself was perfectly inconceivable. This seems to me the principal cause why those men who have so emphatically recommended to others the laying aside all use of words in their meditations, and contemplating their bare ideas, have yet failed to perform it themselves. Of late many have been very sensible of the absurd opinions and insignificant disputes which grow out of the abuse of words. And in order to remedy these evils they advise well that we attend to the ideas signified, and draw off our attention from the words which signify them. But how good soever this advice may be they have given others, it is plain they could not have a due regard to it themselves so long as they thought the only immediate use of words was to signify ideas, and that the immediate signification of every general name was a *determinate, abstract idea*.

24. But *these being known to be mistakes, a man may with greater ease prevent his being imposed on by words*. He that knows he has no other than particular ideas will not puzzle himself in vain to find out and conceive the abstract idea annexed to any name. And he that knows names do not always stand for ideas will spare himself the labour of looking for ideas where there are none to be had. It were therefore to be wished that every one would use his utmost endeavours to obtain a clear view of the ideas he would consider, separating from them all that dress and encumbrance of words which so much contribute to blind the judgment and divide the attention. In vain do we extend our view into the heavens, and pry into the entrails of the earth; in vain do we consult the writings of learned men, and trace the dark footsteps of antiquity; we need only draw the curtain of words to behold the fairest tree of knowledge, whose fruit is excellent and within the reach of our hand.

25. Unless we take care to clear the first principles of knowledge from the embarrass and delusion of words we may make infinite reasonings upon them to no purpose: we may draw consequences from consequences, and be never the wiser. The further we go we shall only lose ourselves the more irrecoverably and be the deeper entangled in difficulties and mistakes. Whoever, therefore, designs to read the following sheets, I entreat him to make my words the occasion of his own thinking, and endeavour to attain the same train of thoughts in reading that I had in writing them. By this means it will be easy for him to discover the truth or falsity of what I say. He will be out of all danger of being deceived by my words, and I do not see how he can be led into an error by considering his own naked, undisguised ideas

## APPENDIX No. II.

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### OF HUME'S SUPPOSED INFERENCES FROM BERKELEY AND KANT'S SUPPOSED REFUTATION OF THEM;

(Translated from Count Mamiani's *Roman Philosophical Review*: LA  
FILOSOFIA DELLE SCUOLE ITALIANE. Vol. XV. No. 1).

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ONE of the most remarkable misconceptions that we meet with in the History of Philosophy,—remarkable not only on account of its magnitude, but on account of its obviousness,—is the notion, now almost universal, that Hume's writings in philosophy were intended by him as serious metaphysical expositions. It is now supposed that in these writings Hume was *not in jest*; that he considered himself a Metaphysician, and wrote as such, with the same gravity as he afterwards wrote his History of England. He naturally expected, we are told, that all who understood the subject would see that he was serious (when upon such enlightened principles *he denied the existence of the material Universe*), neither seeking to ridicule the science of Metaphysics, like some moderns, as a science of nonsense, nor amusing himself at the expense of his metaphysical contemporaries, in a phantasmagoria of the severest sarcasms; and the general conviction of many,—I had almost said,—of most, moderns, is that it was in this serious career of thought and logic that he also ultimately arrived at his three other celebrated principles, founded on the preceding, (1) that there is no such thing as the Cause of anything;

(2) that there is no Thought connected with the Arrangement of the Universe; and (3) that there is no Ego at all; it being merely a sort of optical illusion upon our part which leads us to suppose that even we are ourselves existing; and we are especially invited to admire the majestic gravity with which the profound thinker marches to these quaint conclusions.

Hume, having once assumed that there is no material Universe, could very rapidly have reached the conclusion that there was therefore nothing. The inference is immediate. But this would have been to throw away his game. Instead, therefore, of this, he proceeds with histrionic dignity through a multitude of questions which, he easily saw, would bewilder his shallow contemporaries, as they have done his successors; and, they once bewildered, his task was an easy one. It was soon considered that he had proved, in the clearest and most enlightened manner, upon metaphysical principles, that we have no scientific grounds for thinking that we really exist at all; and in all this it is supposed that Hume was serious,—as his critics now are, and that he expected the next generation would think him so.

Another not less curious misconception of fact which we encounter in the records of philosophical progress at this period, is the notion, likewise almost universal, that Kant, who, like the rest of the world, supposed Hume serious, succeeded in disproving what Hume thus humorously affected to hold as his '*metaphysical principles*,' and what everybody was so ready to believe Hume held.

But perhaps a still more grotesque misconception than either of these is the prevalent belief, not only of the quasi-metaphysical public, but of many Metaphysicians, that Hume understood Berkeley's Doctrine on the Nature of Matter; seeing fully not only its accordance with our ordinary convictions, but also its *à priori* truth; and seriously adopting it as the unassailable basis of his own four grand and strictly logical deductions; for such they are considered to be by all the best judges on such subjects.



On account of the connexion which evidently subsists between these three unaccountable misconceptions on the one hand, and the denial of all scientific basis for Religion on the other,—a denial which is now common among ‘our more distinguished Physicists in England and elsewhere,—it may not be out of place to call attention here, in a few pages, to the three historical misconceptions in question, and to the true relation subsisting between Hume and his predecessor’s Discovery respecting the Nature of the Material Substance, as well as that subsisting between Hume’s successor and Hume himself, with regard to Hume’s four deductions from that Discovery.

It is universally admitted that the source of all that Hume has written under the name of ‘Metaphysics’ (whether Hume wrote it seriously or not), as well as the source therefore of all the metaphysical writings in Germany, from those of Kant to those of Hegel inclusive, was Berkeley’s Doctrine—viz., the Phenomenal Nature of the Material Substance.

The only ground on which any one could pretend to deny this statement is that Berkeley’s doctrine and even his name had almost become forgotten except by Metaphysicians, at a time when Hume and Kant were the common talk even of the unmetaphysical public, there being hardly three or four writers in England, up to so late a period as a quarter of a century ago, who knew what was meant by the words ‘Berkeley’s doctrine,’ even if acquainted with the scientific principle itself so designated; and there being probably not many more in Germany who know what is meant by that expression even now. Any one, however, can see, upon a little reflection, that this does not disprove the fact I speak of (viz., the fact of Berkeley’s doctrine having been the origin of Hume’s writings, and of Kant’s), nor even the fact of its being unceasingly considered in that light, by the few who really and seriously occupied themselves with Metaphysics. Besides, Hume and Kant themselves acknowledge that the fact was as I state it; for Kant says

distinctly that he was led to write in order to refute what he supposed Hume to teach; and Hume tells us, as clearly as he could well have done in his sarcastic circumlocutions, that he wrote his ironical 'System of Metaphysics' solely to laugh at Berkeley's Doctrine (a Discovery so triumphantly subversive of materialism), and at the Metaphysicians of England who were sufficiently discerning (or, as he would say, undiscerning) to see the truth and consequences of that Discovery.

Now, what is this metaphysical tenet known as the Berkeleian Doctrine. It is limited to the single proposition that Matter,—the material thing which we call 'Substance,'—is a Phenomenon, instead of being, as was previously supposed, something entirely unphenomenal and inaccessible to the senses. That is all the Science Berkeley taught. This one point is the whole of his famous Doctrine.

It is true that there are several propositions, some of more, some of less importance,—some more, some less obvious,—all necessarily connected with this great central fact, and true also that some respectable writers speak of these possible deductions, or of some one of these, as the doctrine itself, and as that which Berkeley himself regarded as his doctrine; but all the mystical 'shadowing forth' of these accidental corollaries by these writers, as if they were the doctrine of the great Metaphysician, is entirely without foundation, and is calculated only to astonish us when we reflect upon the quarters from which these points are thus thrust forward as his doctrine,—that grand, unanswerable doctrine which, since it was first promulgated, every Metaphysician,—aye, even every Psychologist, of any consideration, however unsuccessful he may have been in his metaphysical studies,—has found himself constrained to acknowledge the truth of.

Berkeley's opponents in this tenet were, of course, the Materialists, together with all those who, without even sufficient intelligence or knowledge to be consciously Materialists, associate themselves with them, and vaguely declare

themselves what were then and are still called 'Atheists;' also, of course, through the accident of his ecclesiastical position, all those took part against him who were the enemies of ecclesiastical religion, either upon the grounds that Christianity had forbidden public worship, or upon the grounds that it had forbidden the commercial use made of it by the nation, or because they considered the interpretation of it, as then made, frivolous, or oftener, calling themselves enemies of religion without any reflection whatever, and merely because it was the fashion to be opposed to the thing so called, and to accept from ecclesiastics the name of 'infidels.'

Of the three classes of opponents,—the Materialists, the Atheists, and the so-called Infidels,—the latter were by far the most bitter and most numerous. It is very clear that, if Berkeley had been a layman, his doctrine on the essence of a material substance would have only had the very limited opposition of professional Materialists—that is, of all who were consciously and intelligently Materialists. None else of his opponents knew the import of what he taught in Metaphysics, nor could judge of its relation to Theology. But because, in consequence of his position, he was regarded as the advocate of a trade in religion, it was thought quite as necessary to put him down (whenever the opportunity was afforded) as it is now thought right to put down the advocate of the Slave-trade, the Beer-trade, or the Opium-trade. The low condition of metaphysical knowledge in that day did all the rest; and the so-called Infidels were easily hounded on by the professional Materialists. This accident of Berkeley's profession was thus the chief instrument employed by his opponents in the effective opposition which they made to a doctrine so evident that no enlightened man who understands it, now thinks of disputing it, even if he still vilifies what he is taught to call 'Christianity,' and still laughs at what he himself fancies to be 'Metaphysics.'

Of the opponents mentioned, however, the professional

Materialists were naturally the first in the field. But then seeing clearly and rapidly the truth of the new doctrine, so entirely (as they justly suspected) subversive of their theories—seeing also the paucity of the numbers which they, single-handed, would have to bring against it, they at once combined with their more numerous allies, and all, with one accord, raised against the young Metaphysician (Berkeley was then but four-and-twenty) the ordinary ‘*odium theologicum*,’ as the imputation most likely to bring the obnoxious doctrine into disrepute with the ignorant. They said of him: ‘He denies the being of a God in this theory! He is an Atheist!’ Berkeley answered: ‘I am not an Atheist. Nay, if it is once seen clearly that the substance called “matter” is wholly phenomenal, it will be easier, even for unscientific people, to see the certainty of God’s existence, than perhaps many of them see this now; while the thorough Metaphysician thus easily sees that the presence of God and the immortality of the spirit are not only scientific facts, but also facts of *à priori* science. My doctrine is therefore very far removed from Atheism.’ That is all that Berkeley said upon these two principles of Theism and Immortality. Yet, after his explanations to this effect, the self-same adversaries now called out: ‘Ah, he is a theologian! Yes; he seeks to defend the Church. That is the drift of all his droll little theory. It is true that we find him unanswerable; we are no match for him in Logic and in Science; but he is a divine,—a good divine,—too good not to attend to the commercial interests of his profession. As a divine therefore, he is not a trustworthy Metaphysician. No divine is so.’ It was easy for the Materialists to obtain here also the co-operation of all who were enemies of the current Christianity; and to this very hour this is the most popular vilification employed by those who cannot see the reasonableness of what he taught: ‘Berkeley was a bishop,’ ‘a good bishop,’ nay, ‘the good bishop.’

Notwithstanding this onslaught—perhaps in consequence of it—the doctrine that ‘the material substance is of a

phenomenal nature,' had a short period of fashion and popularity—results, however, these, utterly worthless as tests of truth in Metaphysics,—if not in that science, very tolerable evidence of shallowness and error. But this was soon over. The effect of the imputation in question was gradually to limit the reception of the doctrine to the Metaphysicians (that is, to those who alone could appreciate its accuracy and vast scientific importance), apparently, also, however, to give this inauspicious mitre to the founder of the doctrine.

It was after the failure of the foregoing opposition that Hume, then an attorney's clerk in Edinburgh, commenced his attacks upon the doctrine of Phenomenal Matter, stimulated, it would seem, thereto by the discussions in favour of it, which, from time to time, had been carried on in that city, to the great satisfaction we are told of Berkeley himself in his old age. 'The whole thing is false' (said Hume) —'nay, absurd. For my part at least, I cannot think of it but as the purest nonsense. As far as I am myself concerned, I never could accept it; nor do I think it possible that any man in his senses should seriously and steadily hold such a doctrine. The philosopher in his study may perhaps for half an hour think so of the material universe and of the human body; but when he goes out into the streets and mixes with other men, he soon becomes aware of the nonsense of all he is saying and thinking on the subject.'

Such is the substance of Hume's first onslaught; but this form of attack does not seem to have produced the least effect. It did not in fact pretend to more, in reply to Berkeley's adherents, than merely to beg the question against them. The doctrine continued to make the progress among scientific thinkers which clear truth always makes among those who understand the subject in dispute; and even the superficial portion of the Materialists, to say nothing of the more discerning of them, began to feel themselves more and more to be placed in mid air, without even their old familiar flooring of cloud any longer beneath their feet.

At last Hume, seeing the uselessness of a mere *petitio principii*, changed his plan of attack. ‘Berkeley is right,’ said he. ‘The doctrine is clearly true. No one with the least discernment can deny that. But instead of refuting us Sceptics, as our young Collegian intended, and as the worthy Ecclesiastic even afterwards believed he had done, this strange doctrine about Matter’s being a Phenomenon, supports our jocose Sect, and justifies them most wonderfully in their theories. Although there can be no doubt that Berkeley did not mean to teach scepticism, yet he does it; and does it admirably. Let us give him credit both for what he does and for what he intended. Although he had—we must not doubt it—quite a different object in devising this curious little system, and even has great merit in having established it upon a basis so completely irrefragable, he nevertheless here supplies us with some of the best lessons in sceptical philosophy which we have ever had from any writer,—far better than any that my poor pen has been able to furnish. He shows us clearly that we must not believe anything whatever,—not even our own existence;—that if we do so, we are “fools.” He points out with great clearness and great beauty of language, that the material universe does not really exist at all; that it is a mere illusion and delusion to suppose it does, *since all that we speak of as matter and a material universe, consists only of what is perceptible to sense—i.e., of what is immediately perceptible.* This hint is enough for the lightning glance of the Sceptic. We can from this alone easily deduce the *non-existence* of all the rest.

‘We do it thus:—As, according to Berkeley, the material universe has no existence *since it consists only of what can be perceived immediately*; so, likewise, the *Ego*, or Self, has no existence whatever, since this *Ego* is self-conscious—*i.e.*, perceives itself *immediately*, and also, therefore, consists only of what can be perceived *immediately*. Then naturally, as there is no *Ego*, there is no room here nor pretext for the question of Immortality. And further, since matter and the material universe do not exist at all, there is, as Berkeley so well shows,

no physical causation ever possible: no material thing can be the cause of anything. But since physical causation is an impossibility and an absurdity, there clearly can be no such thing as a Cause at all of anything; for there<sup>s</sup> is, we see, no immaterial Ego, this being a thing as *immediately* perceptible as Matter itself. Finally, since it is thus evident that there is no Cause of anything, how can we trifle with our understandings so far as to suppose that there is a God? Such is the substance of Hume's second attack, and such is the substance of all Hume ultimately teaches.

Now, what are we to think of those writers who tell us that Hume, in all this, saw clearly the truth and reasonableness of the Berkeleian doctrine, and that he frankly adopted it as a scientific fact, of which there could be no doubt for the person who understands it? What are we to think of those commentators who assure us in lengthy comments that Hume was not here in jest, and merely occupied with sneers and derision, just as he was, for instance, in what he wrote of Rousseau's quarrel with him, when they were for some time living together in the same bedroom? What of those who assure us that in all this estimate of Berkeley's doctrine and its corollaries there is nothing ironical, nothing sarcastic: that this sort of 'Logic' is what usually enters into serious dissertations: that, in short, Hume wrote his 'philosophical' papers with precisely the same absence of jest and irony—precisely the same becoming gravity and serious statement of fact as that with which he wrote his History of England? Have we not, in this interpretation, now the common one, of what Hume wrote upon this subject, a distressing and almost incredible measure of the metaphysical prowess of the age, of the amount of information, and of the amount of intelligence at present invested in metaphysical research among us? It would seem that even Hume's contemporaries were more discerning, and regarded his work merely as a satire; for they took no notice of it. No one read it. No one cared for it. It was only in the next generation that it began to occupy philosophers.

We next come to speak of Kant's relation to Hume, and of the strange misconception existing upon this point also, among so many even of those in our country who call themselves 'Metaphysicians.'

Kant seems to have discerned at once, in spite of all Hume's misrepresentations, the scientific accuracy of the Doctrine on the nature of Matter satirized in these misrepresentations by Hume with so much ill-concealed asperity, and already apparently known for a long time to Kant himself. Firmly believing, however, in Hume's seriousness, and greatly shocked at the conclusions to which this doctrine seemed to have conducted so *serious* and so *profound* a writer as he supposed Hume to be, Kant immediately engaged, he himself tells us, in a thorough study of Philosophy, in order to refute the three new scientific principles thus ostentatiously promulgated by Hume—viz., that Science has no knowledge of a Cause of anything, no knowledge of an Ego of any kind, material or immaterial, and no knowledge of a Superhuman Intelligence; for Kant took no notice of Hume's fourth pretended principle (his basis for the other three)—viz., that the material universe which we see and feel has really no existence at all. But lo! after much study and much writing, Kant, instead of being able to refute the three supposed principles of science, left them precisely as the merry Scotsman had asserted them—viz., that we may *believe* in a Cause, an Ego, and a God, if we choose, but that there is no scientific evidence of there being such things. Even Hegel, in what he himself regards as the mere development of Kant's philosophy, fully assents to these three principles of Hume's. Let us not forget this strange fact. According to the scientific portion of Kant's and Hegel's writings, there is (precisely as Hume taught) no Ego, no Cause, and no God. What, then, we may ask, was the use or outcome of Kant's scientific effort? What else has it effected than merely to proclaim his assent and sanction, however unintentionally, to what Hume here has written? Does he not thus clearly throw us back again upon the



question as to whether these his three great principles, which are also Hume's, necessarily follow from that Phenomenal Nature of Matter which constituted the whole of Berkeley's doctrine, and which Kant entirely adopted; which does not, however, deny the existence of our Material Universe.

It may be well to enter into a little further detail upon this connexion between Kant and Hume.

Hume, as I have said, was merely and undisguisedly sarcastic and in jest, never in earnest, in what he wrote on Metaphysics. Nothing can be more clear, I repeat, than this is for those of his fellow-countrymen who read his writings—even if the reader is not at all versed in the subject-matter of them. Through the *seribus* opposition, however, of two self-deceived opponents, supposed to be well versed in all this subject-matter—viz., Reid in our country, and Kant in Germany—Hume soon acquired the reputation of being a serious writer, and even a writer that could not be refuted. To a great extent he enjoys this reputation still in our philosophical world; and in this fact we have, as I say, no very flattering estimate of our condition in England with respect to metaphysical sagacity and metaphysical research.

Reid, after being a Berkeleian for twenty years, and Kant after being still longer without seeing anything to find fault with in this 'Phenomenal Nature of the human body and of the Material Substance,' were both of them led by the use Hume made of it—i.e., by Hume's supposed logical deductions from that doctrine—to endeavour to refute both that doctrine and Hume's pretended corollaries. The doctrine, however, they did not refute, and could not refute. No one now pretends they did. In fact, Kant does not seem at last to have even tried to do so. The only question is, as to whether they refuted Hume's deductions from it. But it will be found by those who care to study the matter, that, owing to the verbal confusions in which these two eminent critics were involved, they did not refute even these deductions. Dr. Reid wrote first; and apparently assuming as a thing

of course, that in order to refute Hume thoroughly it was only necessary to refute Berkeley, he set himself to controvert his own conviction of twenty years' standing: he sought to refute Berkeley. This was the sole task he gave himself, and he, supposing that done, supposed that he had done everything. He did not, however, refute Berkeley in the smallest particular. It is now admitted by everybody that he did not, and that he did not even refute Hume. Perhaps it was Reid's utter failure thus in refuting Hume, that made Kant endeavour afterwards to effect this refutation; but there can be little doubt that it was Reid's belief in Hume's seriousness that, to some extent, at least, led Kant also to misinterpret Hume's Comedy; and with metaphysics in the state in which Kant describes that science to have been in Germany, this misinterpretation on his part is the less to be wondered at. Who could at that time in Germany, any more than in England, have decided what was serious and what was not, on such a subject, in such hands as Hume's? And when once Kant found Hume's arguments and inferences to be un-ironical and serious enough to require a serious refutation,—almost every one then, not only in Germany, but even in England, found them to be entirely devoid of this sarcasm and this irony, even when Hume said that *no one but a fool would try to reason or believe anything*.

Be this as it may; Kant, supposing, as Reid did, that Hume was not in jest in his arguments and inferences, but on the contrary quite serious, began, like Reid, for the first time, as he himself tells us, the thorough criticism of Metaphysics, and of Berkeley's doctrine, it would seem, among the rest, for the express purpose of exposing Hume's fallacy in denying to Science a knowledge of Causes, of a Superintending Intelligence over Nature, and of the Immaterial Ego. He continued, however, even after this strict scrutiny, to hold the 'Phenomenal Nature of Matter,' although in some of his expressions he professed to reject it.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps

<sup>1</sup> See the work by Dr. Robert Zimmerman 'Ueber Kant's Widerlegung des Idealismus von Berkeley.' Wien, 1871.

all he meant by this so-called 'rejection' was to condemn the solitary circumstance of Berkeley's having described the size or space of material things as an element or quality of them, instead of describing it as an element and quality of the Ego, or of the Ego's action, in perceiving material things, as Kant himself supposed it to be

But although Kant retained the 'phenomenal nature of matter' as a fact of science,—nay, it would appear, precisely because he did so,—he attacked Hume's three supposed inferences from it, viz., that there is no scientific knowledge of a Cause, an Ego, or a God. His attack, however, upon these inferences, it is now admitted by all Kant's profoundest critics, was entirely futile. After a large amount of explanations respecting his own new view of things, Kant not only holds still, as I have said, Berkeley's doctrine, but Hume's humorous inferences also,—not only retains still as before that great scientific fact, 'the phenomenal nature of the human body and of all else also that we see and feel;' but, in all seriousness and gravity, agrees with the jocular young lawyer in denying, on scientific grounds, the existence of a God, of a Cause, and of an Ego. He has refuted Hume in nothing. He left all these points in the same scientific denial in which Hume himself, with sneers and scoffs of triumph, left them. This every careful student of Kant easily discovers; and that Kant so left them is clear also (even for those who have not studied him), from the fact that all Kant's German successors who professed accordance with Kant, left these principles in the same state as Hume did; for so did Fichte; so did Schelling; so also did Hegel. This last writer candidly acknowledging (contrary to all his critics) that he had added nothing to Kant's doctrine, but merely a more systematic arrangement for the elementary relations of existence, recognized, with Kant and all modern metaphysicians, the truth of Berkeley's doctrine, adopting it, however, as mere matter of course, without taking much pains to acknowledge whose doctrine it was; and denied also seriously, as Hume did in

jest, that there are any scientific grounds for speaking of, or supposing a Cause for anything, a Being capable of perceiving things, or an Intelligence beyond the human. He admits, indeed, like Kant and Hume, that we may practically act as if there were such things, if we like, and do not object thus (as Hume expresses it) to make 'fools of ourselves;' but he reminds us that these things involve relations unknown to exact science, and therefore, for every scientific mind, are really mere non-existent fancies, however much for the practical mind they can also be realities.

So far, then, is Kant from having, as is so commonly supposed, refuted Hume respecting Causation, the Human Spirit, and the Superhuman Intelligence, that he is upon these three important points of knowledge, like so many moderns, Hume's thorough-going adherent. The *non-existence* which Hume affirmed in jest and merely to exasperate the Metaphysicians of his time and country, Kant professes to have established as what cannot possibly be otherwise regarded than as scientific truth of great value.

The question, therefore, still remains just what it was at first: Is it true, as Hume pretends, and as Kant and Hegel also tell us, that this denial or ignorance, upon scientific grounds, of a Cause, a Spirit, and a Supreme Being, follows logically and necessarily from the incontrovertible fact that the Material Substance with which we are so familiar is essentially of a phenomenal nature (i.e. of the same nature as Thought itself is), and that the Sensible or Material Universe, composed of this substance, is thus a Phenomenal or Mental universe, and the human body a Phenomenal body? Or is it, on the contrary, true that this vast and incontrovertible Discovery not only does not prove the non-existence of Cause and Spirit and an Enlightened Absolute, but even shows in the clearest manner the *sine quâ non* character of such things in Nature?

\* In order to know how this question is to be answered, it is necessary to determine with the utmost strictness the *a priori* consequences or complete logical development of

Berkeley's Doctrine,—a thing which its great founder himself has nowhere done ; and when this is effected, seriously and carefully and honestly,—not as by Hume, with jests and equivocations, nor, as by Kant and his followers, with that special German blunder of '*Subject and Object*,' or with labyrinths of new and obscure expressions which could have no other effect but that of bewildering and deceiving both the reader and the writer ;—when this is done, it will then at last be clearly seen that this unassailable Discovery not only does not refute, as we are told it does, the existence of a God, of an Ego, and of a Cause : but, on the contrary, shows that nothing ever can do so ; for in this Discovery, and through it, we get to understand exactly what Causation means, and where and when we are to look for a Cause ; while the existence of a Superintending Intelligence, and the Immortality of the Ego, as well as its existence, become for men of science simple scientific facts,—aye, and facts of an *a priori* science,—instead of being, as they were even for Kant and Hegel, and as they must always be for the unscientific multitude, matters of probability only and merely practical belief.

Every reader of Kant and Hume can ascertain for himself the truth of what has now been said, viz., that Hume was throughout in jest,—jesting even when he professed to have seen the scientific truth of the Berkeleian doctrine,—that Kant believed him serious throughout, and that, although Kant undertook to disprove what he believed to be Hume's serious conclusions, he did not do so ;—that all those persons are involved in mere misconceptions who suppose he did.

It must be admitted that Kant does not sum up the result of his own achievements as it he considered that he had been successful in his undertaking against Hume. It is not here wished to represent him as deceived upon this point also. I only say, with regard to Kant, that he believed Hume serious,—that he undertook to refute him, and that he failed to do so in anything. I also repeat, in conclusion,

—it cannot be too often repeated,—that if metaphysical research had been in Hume's time or immediately afterwards, a more real and more profound occupation among us in England than it then was, even a doubt could never have arisen as to whether he was serious or not, nor should we from the first have deceived the foreign reader respecting him ; and that, if this research, or rather what passes under that name, were not still for the most part, a very superficial study among us,—indeed, for the most part, now only a mere affair of commerce, (consisting more of words, plausibilities, and big volumes, than of *a priori* thought),—there would not now exist, as there does, in our land, this common belief that Hume was a serious writer on these subjects, and even a metaphysician of the highest order, whom we may be proud to follow ; an apt illustration, all this, of the fact above alluded to, that the popular success of a writer in Metaphysics is always, or almost always, in the inverse ratio of his merits as such.

\* I also repeat here what must never be forgotten, that on this point we are a great deal more to be wondered at than the Germans, and other nations, who made the same mistake. The foreigner was not likely to detect the jeering and ironical language which the native could not see. Nay, how could the foreigner be expected to see that this jeering existed when the natives said, and said without a dissentient voice, that it did not ? Kant's misapprehension, therefore, is here manifestly excusable, especially when we take into account the state of Metaphysics in his day and country ; but what excuse can be made for those English commentators upon Hume, who supposed, and still suppose, themselves dealing with a serious writer and careful scientific reasoner, although this writer himself tells them in one of his gravest pages, in which, in fact, he is summing up his work : ' IF I MUST BE A FOOL, AS ALL THOSE WHO REASON OR BELIEVE ANYTHING CERTAINLY ARE, my follies shall at least be natural and agreeable,' &c., &c. These are Hume's own words ; (' Human Nature,' b. i., pt. 4, sec. vii.) and

in almost every page of the work there is something similar.

This strange misconception respecting Hume has now been for the first time pointed out. It is only the common sense, however, and close independent attention of Hume's future readers, that can ever, under existing circumstances, succeed in eradicating the error from our literature, and from our minds, wrapped up and even fondled, as it is, in the learned jargon of his modern critics.

When once this has been thoroughly done, it is not improbable that educated people, instead of turning their back on the Science of Metaphysics, as they now do, will set themselves to seek there the obvious scientific basis of true Christianity and of all Religion; and thus get at last to see that clear principle, respecting which, a foolish phraseology has hoodwinked them so long; viz., that the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right angles is, in no other sense, a scientific fact, and, in no other sense, an *a priori* fact, than that in which any one of the following metaphysical facts is so, viz.: (1.) The Existence and Immortality of the immaterial Ego; (2.) The Existence, Immateriality, and Intelligence of the Absolute, *i.e.*, of a Supreme Being independent of all that has resulted from the action of such a Being, and, (3.) The Existence of a Cause for every change, over and above all the mere conditions under which such change takes place.

# GENERAL INDEX.

WITH

METAPHYSICAL DEFINITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS

(Alphabetically Arranged).

## A

**ABSOLUTE**, The; Its nature necessarily unknowable; its existence indicated to us merely as that of a Spirit, or rather as a nature including a Spirit's powers; because only traceable as such in Nature, xxxvi., xxxvii., and xxxix. The TWO Absolutes of our Opponents, xxxvii.

**Absolute Existence**; Berkeley's expression for an Existence independent of Spirit, or 'Without the Mind.' See Sec. 24, and Without the Mind.

**Absolute Space or Size**; and Absolute Succession or Time. See Secs. 10 *et seqq*; also 97—99, and 110—117. See also Appendix I.

**Abstract Ideas**. Berkeley's Essay on these. See Appendix I.

**Accidents**, used as a mere synonym for Qualities. See Qualities.

**Actions and Agents**. See Causation; also Operations. There can be no Action without an Agent; and, except in a figurative sense, no Agent that is not an intending one.

**Adherents and Opponents**. All who, having studied the PROPOSITION, are not thorough Adherents of the Doctrine are Opponents; and all such who are not Opponents are Adherents. The Opponents most successful with the multitude because most deceitful as well as self-deceived, and therefore very few, are those who profess a 'partial' adhesion; 'or no such thing is here possible; and is known not to be so. A thing cannot be both a Phenomenon and not a Phenomenon; nor can it be partly one and partly the other. A Proposition cannot be partially *a priori*. Nothing can be clearer than this; yet such is the favourite mode of attack

adopted in our country by the few who still oppose the great scientific fact here in question. See Opponents.

**Audible**. There is nothing audible but sensations and their qualities. The cause of Sound is not audible, nor is it Sound. We hear the noise a carriage makes, but not the carriage itself. It is only in a very loose and figurative sense that we can say we hear a carriage.

## B

**BODIES**; sensible objects, or groups of sensible qualities. Berkeley commonly uses this term, as, in his time, his opponents did, to signify 'insensible bodies,' just as he so often uses 'Matter,' in their sense of 'insensible matter.' The human body, however (as well as all other animal bodies) is a sensible object or Sense-phenomenon; and so is the brain.

**Brain and Skull**; each a Group of sensible qualities, without any other substratum or support for these qualities but the Group itself, p. 10. See Subject. Those who formerly imagined that it was the ear which heard, the hand which felt, and the eye which saw, have long since bravely abandoned these notions, and now think it is the brain which does all. But how is a group of sensible qualities to hear, see, or feel? How can such a Nature perceive anything? Some, indeed, have thought it was the blood, not the brain, and others have supposed it was the whole body, that perceived things; and certainly the brain, without the assistance of the blood and of the rest of the body, could perceive very little—quite as little as the rest of the body without the brain;



and so it seems to be admitted now pretty generally, that without the help of the blood, the brain would be as blind and deaf as any other portion of the body. So that after all, the group of qualities known as the brain seems to have, for educated people, no exclusive pretensions of this description. It is now only the few writers who are, in spite of themselves, the declared opponents of advanced science, that suppose the brain to see, to hear, or to feel anything. On the position of the Sensible Universe within the skull in the nerves of the brain, *see* **xxvi**, **xxix**, **xxx**; also pp. 21—23, and 88—91.

## O

**ORATION**, Secs. 25—33, and Commentary.

'Christians;' some so called as well as some 'Theists,' determined Opponents of the Doctrine, Secs. 82—84; also 150.

**COLOUR** is a Sensation; and so is **LIGHT**. *See* any elementary work on Optics. The cause of Colour, whatever it is, is not Colour; and the cause of Light is not Light.

**COMMON SENSE**, contradicted by our Opponents who deny that our other Sensations and their qualities can be external to the group of these which we call our body, **xxix**.

**CONSCIOUSNESS**, an occasional state or attribute of the spirit; but the sensations that we experience and their qualities are neither states of the spirit nor of its consciousness. They are only states of the groups they themselves form, p. 96. Consciousness is not essential to the existence either of the Spirit or of its Objects, Secs. 22—24, and Commentary.

**CONTEMPORARY REVIEW**; Exposition given in it, **li**.

**CONVICTIONS** of the Unscientific and Uneducated, respecting the Objects of Sense, in entire accordance with Berkeley's *a priori* Proposition, **xxiii**, Secs 35, 37, 54.

**CORPOREAL SUBSTANCE** (or body), a group of sensible qualities, but often used by Berkeley's Opponents, and even by himself, to signify (like 'body') the insensible and unknown sort of thing so called, supposed to produce the real corporeal substance that we see and feel, Secs. 1 and 37.

**CRITICS**, untrustworthy as **EXPOSITORS**.

## D

**DREAM** is, with our present knowledge of Nature, but the awakening from a dream; since the material Universe is a sort of dream in which we are all made to experience precisely the same

dream; and which at death can be, and not improbably is, completely withdrawn from each spirit, Secs. 40, 41, and Commentary.

**DISCUSSIONS** of the Doctrine abroad, **li**. Why entered upon by foreign Opponents and declined by the English ones, **xvii**.

**DISTANCE** exists (and can exist to any extent) between all the groups of sensations and their qualities, which groups are placed around the Groups called our own bodies; and we can see this distance when it is from right to left of us; but we cannot see it *in the line of sight*. We can then only see the signs of this distance, which distance in the line of sight was, in Berkeley's time, called also 'Outness,' Sec. 43. No one denies the existence of distance in the line of sight, except our Opponents; the only question among others being as to whether we see it or infer it. Yet nothing can be clearer than it is that we only infer it. *See* Macmillan's Magazine for March, 1866.

**DOCTRINE**. Ours stated, **xxi**, **xxii**; agrees with the convictions of the Unscientific, but the knowledge of it wholly confined to the Scientific, as is also the case with the Copernican system, **xxiii**. Consists of only one Proposition, **xxi**; which is an *a priori* Principle, Secs. 21 and 22; not disputed even by those who profess to do so, **xxxiii**, **xxxvii**, pp. 119 and 121. The doctrine opposed to ours, **xxiv**, **xxv**. Origin of the doctrine opposed to ours, **xxv**. Berkeley's Summary of his own Doctrine, Sec. 1. Six facts, the knowledge of which is necessary for understanding what is meant, **xxvii**. Various ways of stating the doctrine, **xxvii**,—**xxxix**. Misrepresentations respecting it, **xxxix**—**xlii**.

## E

**EDITIONS** of Berkeley, hitherto all hostile or silent, **v**, **vi**, **xlix**. Advantages of the present, **v**, *et seqq.*

**EDITOR**. The present editor's contrivances to promote the study of the Doctrine, especially among its Opponents, **i**, **iii**.

**EGO**; the Mind, Person, or Spirit. Its Immateriality, a first Corollary from the Doctrine, p. 11. Its consequent Immortality, Sec. 141. It is to it only that the perceived or phenomenal materials are adapted. It is their *esse quod non*. All other nature is 'outside it' and, if known to exist, can only be inferred; as, for instance, other Egos and the Absolute. The Nature or Essence of the Ego or Spirit is not only to perceive, as, for the sake of brevity, we often say, but to **DESIRE** to perceive, and so bring before it the truth of things. In mere perception, the Ego is passive,—i.e., takes no part; is simply inactive. It

is only active in applying or not applying the organs of sense.

**Emotions** are passions, or mere passive states of active nature, and therefore involuntary. What is voluntary, with regard to them, is the control of the thoughts which precede them. They, like the acts of the Mind and like sensations, are original Objects in Nature, of which we can have Ideas, or more properly notions, and they are themselves, therefore, Ideas in the metaphysical sense of the word; but, as such, they are not Ideas of *anything*, being original objects in Nature. They are states of the Spirit: in which important particular they differ from sensations and from the qualities of sensations, p. 6. See Operations of the Mind.

**Essence** (the *esse* of things), different from, although often confounded with, Existence, p. 9. The Essence of all mental things is their perceived nature, implied in this word 'mental,'—their *percepti*; whereas the Essence of the other nature known to us, the Essence of spirit, is *percipere*; the existence of all such things (of things mental or of spirits themselves) being their permanent conformity to the laws of their respective natures, whether this nature be perceptible to sense, as in a stone; or not so, as it is in a spirit; as it is also in our mere idea of a stone.

**Existence.** See Essence. Unintermittent Existence of Sense-Phenomena, or Sensible Objects, xxxiv., xxxv., Secs. 22—24, also 46—48, and Commentary.

**Expositions of the Doctrine**, in 'Contemporary Review,' li.; in 'Journal of Speculative Philosophy,' *ibid.*; in 'Anthropological Review,' *ibid.* See Discussions.

**Expositors of Berkeley's *a priori* Proposition**, why so few, vi., xiv.; and why chiefly hostile, v.

**Extent, Space, and Size** mean the same thing—one and the same sensible quality. Extent is the generic term. Space is size with reference to what it holds or can hold, and as viewed internally. Size is space viewed externally, and when the capacity is not so much thought of. The extent of a building taken within its walls is space; the extent taken outside its walls is size. There is no such thing as undelineated, insensible, or Abstract Extent. A 'mere idea' cannot be either long or short. See Absolute Space.

**Externality to the Mind**, xxvi and xxvii., also Secs. 18—20, and Commentary, as well as 42—44, and Commentary. See likewise Sec. 90. Externality to the Skull, *ibid.*, and Externality to the Sensible Universe, or the *Totum Sensibile*, *ibid.* Our Opponents think that these three expressions mean the same thing. External to the Understanding, or to Mind, means of such a nature that it could not be perceived, even if all the supposed obstacles to its being per-

ceived were removed,—something whose nature is no more adapted to the operations of a spirit than sound is to the Eye. See Within Mind; see also Skull.

'External to our own bodies' means outside us, as we see and feel the various groups of sensible qualities to be around us, all which objects our Opponents suppose to be within our Skulls. Finally, nothing that requires space can exist beyond, or external to, the sensible or delineated Universe; for all space is sensible, or physically delineated—i.e., there is no space possible external to sensible space. These Opponents, however, suppose there is an Abstract Space outside real space, and an Abstract Universe outside the sensible one—i.e., outside the Mind. See Mind.

## F

**FEEL, To.** We cannot feel anything but sensations, and the qualities which these felt sensations delineate. See To Hear and To See.

**Feels, or Kinds of Feel**; the tactile sensations; such as a hard feel, a soft feel, a heavy feel, a cold feel, a round feel, a square feel, &c., meaning all the qualities which the sensation called Feel delineates. The term 'feeling,' which has a moral application only, is here sometimes confusedly employed in the physical sense. But a stone has no feeling. Some people call hardness and softness, weight and cold, sensations, because they are not primary qualities—i.e., are not perceived through TWO senses, like shape and size; nor through ALL, like Time and Number; but, strictly speaking, they are only qualities, or modifying circumstances, in the sensations called Feels; just as in the case of *bright* colours, *dim* colours, *ugly* colours, &c., where ugliness, or brightness, or dimness, is not a sensation, but the quality of one.

**Figure, Shape, Form**, are here the same thing, but not a sensation, as so many think. It is like size and movement,—a quality in Feels or Colours; and though quite different in these two classes of Sensations, the two kinds of shape so far correspond as to admit, after experience, to be practically regarded as One.

**FISCHER KUNO**, the distinguished Professor of Heidelberg. His able Expositions of Berkeley mentioned, li.

**Force.** There is no such thing. Liberty, Permission, or Choice has been mistaken for it. The same is true of Power, when this is used synonymously, and of Energy—all figurative expressions, used at first in ignorance, but now for the convenience of language.

**Freedom, Choice or Liberty**, what we commonly mistake for Physical Force.

## G

**GOD**; the religious name given to the Absolute, which is revealed to us in the Material Universe as a Spirit, xxxvi—xxxix. His Nature entirely and necessarily unknown, *ibid.* The Cause of the Material Substance, Sec. 6, also pp. 31 and 32. The evidence of God's presence greater than that which we have of one another's presence, Secs. 145—149.

## H

**HALL'SCHE ZEITSCHRIFT.** Discussions in it, II.

**Hardness**, not a sensation, but a quality marked out by the sensation called Feel; a quality, therefore, of certain Feels or Tactual Sensations, as its opposite quality, softness, also is.

**HARRIS'S JOURNAL OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY.** Exposition in it of our Doctrine, II.

**Head.** See Skull, and Brain. All these are Groups of Phenomena.

**Hear, To.** We hear nothing but sensations and their qualities; although we also commonly say that we hear the things to which these belong—viz, a carriage, a cannon, or a bell.

**HUME's** supposed recognition of Berkeley's *a priori* Proposition, and supposed inferences from it, Appendix No. II.

## I

**IDEA.** This word is, on this subject, employed to mean a PICTURE, whether original or a copy; it means not only the tree which we see, but also our recollection of it. Both are things of a nature adapted to be *immediate* present to the mind, not necessarily things immediately present to it. The original pictures are called Ideas of Sense, to distinguish them from what we commonly call 'ideas,' or 'mere ideas,' and which are our pictures of the Originals. The original pictures are not copies of anything. As the word is used a good deal, on this subject, it is important to know exactly what is meant by it. See Secs. 39, 30, 41. The term 'idea,' is, in some cases, less suitable than the term 'notion' or 'knowledge,' Sec. 39. Spirits and Ideas, the only two natures known to us, p. 12 and Sec. 36, and therefore the only two we can conceive. Phenomena and Sense-phenomena are synonyms here for Ideas and Ideas of Sense. Confusion made by the ignorant between Ideas of Sense and our mere Ideas of these, pp. 7 and 8; also Secs. 33, 36, and 41. An Idea cannot perceive anything, p. 11; and in the metaphysical sense, can be round or square,—can be two yards wide, and have a large hole

in the centre, as occurs in the case of a millstone, for instance, p. 8; also xxvii. Identity and Permanence imply each other. What the identity is between the phenomena of different spirits, and what object it serves, p. 12. In what sense the knowledge which I have of anything to-day, and this same knowledge to-morrow, are different: or the colours in the room to-day, and these same colours to-morrow; or the Iliad of to-day and the Iliad of last year (the only known difference here being the Time and the Place); or the rainbow seen by twenty people;—are such things identical, or different? See Permanence.

**Immaterial** means without any of the qualities of Matter,—without any Material or sensible qualities. The *immaterial matter* of our Opponents is therefore a mere self-contradiction.

**Immateriality of the Ego**, an *a priori* principle, Sec. 2.

**Immortality of the Spirit**, also an *a priori* principle, Sec. 141.

'**Impression on the Senses**,' a phrase of Berkeley's to mean a sense-presentation to the Ego or Mind;—an Idea of Sense presented to Perceptant Nature.

**Instinct.** The perceptant nature which is not man's can be so called for the sake of distinction, instead of Spirit, Ego, &c, but both of them, forms of Perceptant Nature, are equally immaterial, and both in the same relation to the Material or Sensuous Universe, and to the Material Bodies which they control.

**Intermission of Phenomenal Existence.**

We deny this intermission. Our Opponents maintain it. Our Opponents hold that the objects of sense do not exist except while we are looking at them, or touching them, or listening to them; and this obliges these theorists to suppose that there must be something in their places instead of them, during such intervals. But for neither of these strange notions is there the slightest ground whatever. No one thinks that his knowledge ceases to exist while he is asleep. Why then should he suppose that his house does, or that his body does? And even if it were true that they did then cease to exist, to think of putting something quite different in their positions instead of them, far from being, as some seem to think, '*the summit of human wisdom*,' will probably appear to most people the most childish nonsense imaginable. See Permanence.

## J

**JOBERT (A. C. G.),** a zealous Anti-Berkeleyan, was, in 1850, offered £500 for any refutation of our Doctrine that he could obtain from our Opponents, or that he could induce them *alone* to approve of among themselves, without any

further arbitration; and after trying for several months, he at last declared himself unable to obtain any such refutation, or to produce any, I.

## K

KANT's supposed Refutation of Hume, Appendix No. II.

Knowledge or Notion, a term sometimes preferable to Idea. See Sec. 89.

## L

LAWS of Nature—*i.e.*, those regulating the permanence and changes of Phenomena, whether Sense-phenomena or not, are produced, as well as their Uniformity, by the same cause as the Phenomena themselves, *viz.*, by the Spirit-Action of the Absolute. Secs. 30—32, 37, 60—66. See Uniformity of Nature.

Liberty, or Power, or Permission, in Nature is what we also figuratively call *Energy* or *Force*.

Light, a Sensation; not the condition or cause of one,—as some Physicists endeavour to teach.

Literature of our Doctrine, xlv. to lll.

## M

MACKINTOSH on Berkeley's Opponents of all shades, lli.

MAMIANI, Rosmini's successor in the Philosophy of Italy, discusses the Doctrine, li.

Material substance consists wholly of material or sensible qualities, Sec. 1, and Commentary. No substance without these qualities is material. Berkeley does not deny the existence of Matter, or a Material Substance. It is his Opponents who deny the existence of Matter, saying, like Hume, that the Material Substance *immediately* perceived does not really exist at all. See Appendix, p. 201; see also Corporal Substance.

Matter. Two kinds are talked of,—that which has material qualities, and that which has none; the one, of course, *sensible*, the other, also of course, *insensible*. The immaterial or insensible matter is that which Berkeley denies. It is his Opponents, not he, who deny the common or sensible matter, Sec. 37.

Mental Things, not things which the mind causes to exist, but which the mind enables to exist, inasmuch as they can exist without it,—such as sorrow and bodily pain, sounds, feels, and colours, &c.

Mind, the Ego, Spirit, or Perceptant. In Metaphysics the term 'Mind' is never used for Thought, or the Mind's Action, as in Psychology, although Berkeley adopts the phrase 'being in the mind'

to signify being a Mental thing,—being 'in the thoughts' or 'in the thinking.' This phrase, 'to be in the Mind,' leads many to think of the Spirit as a sort of space in which things can be placed, and to suppose that when we say things are in the mind, we either mean that we are conscious of them, or that we are thinking of them. But this is not the meaning. We only mean that they consist of thought or thinking: that this is their Essence,—the Essence, for instance, of a sensation. Their Existence does not depend upon what their Essence is, but upon the laws to which this Essence is subject. When a stone is dropped into still water, it makes the circular waves; but it is the water itself which furnishes the Essence or materials of these waves. So, also, it is the Mind's Action which supplies the Essence of its Phenomena, but not the Mind's Action which makes these Phenomena exist. See Without the Mind, and Exteriority.

MONATSHEFTE OF BERLIN. Exposition and Discussion in that journal, li.

Motion. No such thing possible as absolute, *i.e.*, undelineated, motion, or an absolute, *i.e.*, undelineated, shape.

## N

NATURE is the orderly Permanence and Change of Phenomena, whether Sense-phenomena or not, Sec. 150. It is also used sometimes as a synonym for Essence.

NATURE AND ELEMENTS OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD, the first Exposition and Defence ever published of Berkeley's doctrine after his own time, l. When published, *ibid.* None of the so-called Opponents ever ventured to reply to any of its arguments, although all new, being intended to reply to new objections, and although the author is the only one of Berkeley's numerous Adherents who has felt the necessity of furnishing the present generation with any fresh Exposition or Defence of the Doctrine; any, that is, beyond that which Berkeley himself has given, v, vi. All the new Editions are hostile.

Notion or Knowledge is a more correct term for that which represents one Spirit in another's thoughts than the term 'idea' (or image) is. It is also a better expression for an Emotion, or Action, or any other Relation, Sec. 142.

Number and Time are qualities of all Phenomena; but are qualities that have no existence undelineated or abstract.

## O

OBJECTIONS, fourteen answered by Berkeley in PART II. Some raised by 'Chris-

tians,' some by Theists, some by Scientific Men, and some by the so-called 'Advocates of Common Sense.'

**Objective Existence.** In Metaphysics there is nothing Objective that is not also Subjective, nor anything Subjective that is not also Objective. 'Object and Subject,' a German invention of no use, and which has led to much confusion, which is only now gradually clearing away. p. 208.

**Operations of the Mind, Sec. 1.** Here, as everywhere, the import of the word Action or Operation is determined by the circumstance of its being voluntary or not. In the Mental Operations, as well as in Material Operations, there is a certain amount of compulsion present. It is only as far as there is Liberty that the Spirit or Ego acts. In other cases it is only its nature or something else that acts. For instance, feeling pain, seeing the lightning when it flashes before us, or hearing the word unexpectedly uttered at our ear, are not voluntary operations, Secs. 29, 30, 33—40. When the Spirit consciously and intentionally applies the organ of sense, then, but only then, can it be truly said that the feeling, or hearing, or seeing is the act of the Spirit. There need never be, however, any difficulty as to which sense is meant. Berkeley here does not specify either kind of action, for his remark applies to both kinds. They are both primary facts, original objects connected with, or experienced by, the spirit and. In that sense 'Ideas,'—not Ideas, therefore, of anything, but phenomenal objects of which we can have ideas, or, more accurately speaking, notions, Secs. 89 and 142. On this compound character of the Mental Operations the reader may find much careful and profound thought in Mamiani's Conjunction Theory (La Teoria della Congiunzione), in which the distinction now indicated is stated with great precision and originality.

**Opponents, bad Expositors, vii.—x.** Our Opponents impute the blunders and extravagances of their own doctrine to ours, xi. and xii. Foreign Opponents invite or accept discussion: the English Opponents decline it, xvi. See Adherents.

**Organs of Sense.** These are all of them groups of sensible qualities, which can of course perceive nothing, Sec. 2. On this latter point now most people are agreed. The special organs, such as the eye, the surface of the body, the ear, the nose, and the palate, were, each, for a long time supposed to perceive their special objects. This seems to be now entirely given up; but some psychologists have transferred this faculty to the general organ, and think that it is only the brain that perceives things. There is, however, precisely as little reason for this theory as for the other. All these

groups of qualities which we call organs are only the conditions under which the other groups are perceived by that Nature which alone is capable of perceiving anything, *ibid.* The few scientific men who still think that the brain is not the mere condition, or organ, under which the Objects of Sense are perceived, but the very Nature itself which perceives these Objects, also suppose, and not unnaturally, that what this organ perceives must necessarily be *in* or *on* the organ itself; and so they are compelled to suppose that all the sensible objects are inside the skull, where this organ is, p. 21 *et seqq.* and 88 *et seqq.* See also Brain.

**Outness, or Distance in the line of sight,** exists, but cannot be seen. Can generally be inferred from signs. This outness or distance, whether in the line of sight or not, exists between all the qualified sensations by which our bodies are surrounded, and between all the groups of these qualified sensations. The colours, sounds, and tactual sensations are all outside our bodies, and at various, sometimes vast, distances from them. These are all, therefore, Outward Objects in the ordinary sense of Outward or External. See these Words.

**Outside Mind** means without any nature or properties of any kind that mind can perceive or even imagine; impossible to be thought about; unperceptible of any mental action. See Within Mind. Our Opponents suppose 'outside the Mind to mean Outside the Skull, because they think that the Spirit is within the Skull. See Externality.

**Outward Objects.** By this expression our Opponents mean the supposed insensible Objects, *outside* the Sensible Universe; and in this perverted use of language Berkeley often humours his Opponents and Critics, speaking as though he denied the existence of the Objects outside us and around us; but meaning, of course, those outside the Visible Universe. See Externality.

P .

**PERCEIVED Things.** Things exist as perceived things even when they are not perceived, and as known things even when they are forgotten. One way in which this happens is that the phenomena not present to one mind are present to another mind; and so, in each case, they exist only as perceived things, not as things present to each mind;—i.e., they exist, even for my understanding, as perceived things exist, although I myself do not perceive them. Besides that, the complete similarity between the phenomena of different Spirits under the same circumstances of time, place, and organ, p. 12, completely effects this identity between things when perceived and when not perceived; so that

- even things not perceived exist as perceived. Another way in which this happens is, that all perceived things are Mental things, and can therefore exist even when forgotten, if their laws require it, just as our knowledge exists as knowledge, even when we are unconscious of its existence, and as colours can exist as seen, even when we cannot see them. See Permanence and Intermission. Since, moreover, the Absolute is always conscious of all things, perceived things have thus, also, an intermittent existence, p. 81.
- Perception**, an equivocal term, denoting either Essence or Existence when applied to objects. *Percepta* denotes Essence only, not Existence. Some of our Opponents, by a perception, understand an *inference*, and when they only see a book upon the table, they say they see the author there; which, of course; is not Science. Perception is also the name of a mental operation. See Perceived Things.
- Perceptible**, the Ego or Spirit in Man; the Instinct in brutes. All that is true of the one with regard to Perception and the Material Substance, is true of the other also; and both are immaterial, Sec. 2, and Commentary.
- Permanence**, or Non-intermission, is as much an attribute of our knowledge and mere ideas during the intervals of unconsciousness as it is of the Ego itself, or as it is of any other thing we can imagine. In fact, it is from the Ego alone that we derive any conception of Permanence that we possess; and we are as conscious of this Permanence in all Phenomenal Nature as we are conscious of anything. It is our Opponents alone who deny the Permanence of sensible objects. See Perceived Things.
- Personality** or Person. This is the Essential Characteristic of the Spirit. We have no other notion of this but what we derive from our knowledge of the discerning, remembering, and choosing Element in Nature—viz., the Spirit or Mind.
- Phenomenon**, in its Metaphysical sense, is very nearly synonymous with Idea. The one is an item of Knowledge; the other an item of Perception—i.e., a *Perceptum*. A Phenomenon, like an Idea, means anything immediately present to the mind, or which exists, even when not present, just as it would if it were present. This, also, like an Idea, can be as hard and heavy as a millstone or an iron hundredweight; yet each sensation is one, and each quality of a sensation is one; also the Group of these is one. The animal body is as much a Phenomenon (or Group of Phenomena) as any other Material Object. The Brain is one also. When Berkeley says that the Material Universe is a Phenomenon, he merely means that all its Objects are Groups, Clusters, or Congeries of Material Qualities, without any mysterious element wrapped up in, or otherwise connected with, these Groups, as our Opponents assure us there is wrapped up in them, or connected with them; and that all these Groups or Objects are at their various distances from each person's body; which obvious fact these Opponents deny. The Spirit is the only thing we know of that is not a Phenomenon. Each separate Spirit has its own separate Phenomena; but all Phenomena under the same conditions of time, place, and organ are, for each Spirit, minutely the same, thus preventing, in a very curious and interesting manner, the isolation of the Spirit, xxxviii., also p. 12.
- Philosophy** is the Criticism of Research in any department of knowledge;—the love of or striving after truth, *φιλα της σοφιας*. It is chiefly applied to the criticism of Metaphysics; and, strangely enough, is by many, even enlightened men, confounded with that Science itself; although, in Metaphysics, every Proposition is *a priori*, and never either what is called a 'reasonable probability,' or an 'opinion;' whereas, in the so-called 'Philosophy,' or 'this Criticism of Metaphysics,' there is not one Proposition that is not a 'probability,' or 'opinion,' or that even pretends to be anything else.
- Place**, Position, or Situation, is an occasional Attribute or Result of Space; in fact, Space, taken at a single point; a relation subsisting between one part of space and all the rest,—the uniting point of many distances. Place is therefore, as space is, within the world of mind; it is a Mental thing.
- Power** or Liberty does not mean Physical Force in the vulgar sense of that expression, being, on the contrary, another term for 'Permission;' which, although commonly mistaken for Physical Force, bears no resemblance to what we call so.
- Primary** qualities are not Sensations. Many writers of great distinction have mistaken them for Sensations, and have called them so; and their being so very different led many others to think them independent of sensations. But they are neither sensations, nor independent of sensations. There are two kinds of them, which, for the sake of precision, it is worth while distinguishing;—1, those that are common to two or more senses; as shape, and size, and motion, which belong to two senses; as Time and Number belong to all; and, 2, those that belong to one Organ only; as Dimness and Brightness, to Colours only; Hardness and Weight, to Feels only.
- Prizes** of £100, and afterwards £500 offered to Berkeley's Opponents for any possible

Refutation that they could agree upon among themselves, without any further arbitration being required by the Proposer of the Prizes, I.

## Q

**QUALITIES** are *in*, not *upon*, the objects to which they belong; and each quality is *part* of the Object, the object itself consisting entirely of all such qualities. The Subject, then, or Substratum of the sensible qualities is the very group itself which they form. Each is part of it, and each qualifies it. The word 'subject' never could have had any other meaning for the human Understanding except among the most superficial 'Thinkers.' Qualities of other qualities are evidently also qualities of the objects in whose groups these other qualities are.

**Quantity** denotes the existing proportion, size, or degree of any quality, but, in the absence of all other specification, the proportion of size is generally understood.

## R

**REALITY.** The Sensible Object or Sense-Phenomenon which each person can see under the same advantages of sense and position, is a real thing, whether it be a Rainbow, a Millstone, or the Atmosphere. Nothing is more real than that which we, in any form, perceive by the senses; i.e., than the Sense-phenomena,—the Groups of Sensible qualities; yet we all know that sorrow and joy can also be very real things, though they are not Objects of Sense, Secs. 29, 30, 33—40. But Reality presents no difficulty in our Doctrine, although very great difficulty in that of our Opponents.

**REICHLIN-MELDEGG** (Baron), the late Professor of Philosophy at Heidelberg; discussion with him, II.

**Relations.** We say that we have an *idea* of any definite size that we have seen; because there remains, with us, a sort of *picture* representing it in our Memory; but we cannot say, with the same propriety, that we have a *picture* or *image* of the difference between two sizes or of their identity. It is in such a case better, because more accurate, to speak of our Knowledge or Notion, than of our idea. But this only for the sake of extreme accuracy and precision upon a subject in which these are so indispensable, Sec. 142.

**Rest** is a so-called 'primary quality,' like Shape and Space, i.e., it is a quality of Extended things. So also is movement; but shape and size, or space, are permanent and contemporaneous qualities, whereas Rest is not so, and Movement is not so; only one of the two existing at a time.

## S

**SEE, To.** We see Sensations and their qualities; nothing else. What else is there to see? the reader will naturally ask. It is the Spirit or Ego which alone sees. Formerly it was supposed that it was the eye that saw the little picture on its retina. Then it was supposed that the brain was a sort of eye, and was able, although under difficulties, to see this picture. This is now what our Opponents, as well as those who never heard of the Berkeleyan Doctrine, still hold; holding also that there is nothing at all to be seen outside the Skull; since, say they, there can be neither Light nor Colours OUTSIDE the Colours of the Skull. How is it that so many educated people can be found to listen to such rubbish?

**Sensations.** Nothing else can be seen or felt except sensations of their qualities. This is admitted on all hands. All the sensible qualities are not sensations, although all the editors represent them as such. A Sensation is never a state either of the Spirit or of that accident (quality) of Spirit which we call consciousness. What would it mean, to be the state of an attribute or quality? The sensations which we perceive at each organ of sense are perceived only at that one organ. The primary qualities are not so limited. Some are found at two or more organs. The mere Sensations are Tastes and Odours, Sounds, Feels, Light, and Colours. The term 'Sensation' is also used to designate a Mental Action, or, as Berkeley calls it, 'an Operation of the Mind;' but this signification is never required, and never used, except for purposes of confusion.

**Sensible or Sensuous** means manifest in sense. This is one of the words by the aid of which our Opponents seek to complicate this subject for the unscientific. The 'complication,' however, is very transparent. Nothing is sensible except Sensations and their qualities, and the Groups these form. The Cause of these Groups or of these sensations is never sensible. Our Opponents themselves admit that it is not. Some, indeed, have tried to make it appear that what is essentially insensible, and what they themselves admit to be so, may nevertheless be called Sensible, since, say they, it may produce the Sensible! And upon these preposterous grounds they apply the word 'sensible' to the Absolute, when they recognize that there is one, or to an insensible, immaterial Universe when their theories oblige them to adopt such a Universe. These are the writers who, when they see a book upon a table, say they see the author there; and who nevertheless call themselves men of scientific accuracy. The Reader will require to be strictly upon his guard upon

this point with respect to the very few writers who now array themselves against the enormous scientific progress resulting from this Discovery of Berkeley's.

**Size, Space, Extent, Magnitude,** all names of one and the same primary quality or Sense-phenomenon, which, in the case of Space, implies Capacity; in the case of size or extent, this is not adverted to or implied. These things have no absolute, abstract, or undelineated existence, Sec. 9, *et seqq.*, also Sec. 122, *et seqq.*

**Skull.** It is a Congeries or Group of Sensible (i.e., material) Qualities; and so also is the brain; yet our Opponents think that all the other sensible Objects around us in the world are literally placed within these two Groups; and even tell the ignorant that this Skull-theory of theirs is what we also and all people hold. But why should the Universe of Sense be within the Skull of sense, rather than this Skull within this Universe? xxvi.

**Sounds** are sensations, and are combined with various qualities. See any Elementary Chapter on the Physiology of the senses. See also Jobert's Treatise on 'Sounds pure Sensations.' We cannot hear anything but Sounds and their Qualities. We cannot hear their Causes.

**Spirit** One Spirit or Ego does not perceive another, nor the Phenomena (or Ideas) of another. It only infers them. The exact and constant similarity between the Phenomena of different Spirits under the same conditions is here equivalent to identity, and supplies the means of communication between Spirit and Spirit, p. 12. See Ego and Perceptant.

'States of Consciousness,' a curious but favourite phrase of a few Psychologists. The only such states we know of are degrees,—degrees of consciousness, degrees of Dimness and of Vividness, or, as it is sometimes called, the partial state and the complete state of consciousness. The sensible qualities are neither states of the Spirit nor of this occasional attribute of the Spirit which we call Consciousness. Even Sensations are not so. This notion that the Spirit turns into, or becomes each Group of sensible qualities which it is conscious of as present to its Organs of Sense (into a teapot, for instance, when it perceives a teapot), still lingers among us, and gives a curious measure of our metaphysical prowess, drawing, as we now are, towards the end of the nineteenth century.

**Subject of Qualities** or their Substratum. This is always the Object itself, which these qualities constitute. They are in it and part of it, and they qualify it. The old-fashioned theory that there might be something perhaps, *without* any of these qualities, but upon which these qualities might rest, as the cloth rests upon the table, or a bird upon a branch, is still thought by some among us to be

'the summit of human Wisdom.' But of course no Logic is assigned. The Logic and the Logician seem to be both, in his own expression, 'mired.'

**Succession of Phenomena, or Time,** is a quality of all Phenomena, to which Nature it is strictly limited. We thus see that the Spirit is independent of Time

## T

**TACTILE, Tactnal.** By these words we mean what can be felt, not what can be touched by something else (that is usually expressed by 'tangible'); and nothing can be felt but sensations and their qualities, or the Groups these form. The tactile sensations can be called Feels, but not Feelings. No material object has any feeling, although it consists of Feels and Colours.

**Thing or Being** is the most general term, and is applied both to Ideas and Spirits, Sec. 89.

**Time** is the Succession of Phenomena. If there were none of these there would be no Time. It is therefore a quality of Phenomena, not of Spirits.

**Touch or Contact** (the Tangible) does not give the tactile sensations unless one of the bodies is connected with some perceiving Nature; i.e., is the organ of feeling, as the eye is of seeing. Calling the skin, then, or the living body, or any portion of it, the organ of 'touch,' or of contact, as so many Physiologists do, is, they must see, inaccurate. The surface of the animal body is the organ of the sensations called tactile or tactual, and for feeling these; not the organ for trying to feel them. We do not call the eye the organ of look; nor the ear the organ for listening. One Group of material qualities can touch another, but the immaterial Perceptant does not touch anything, although it feels. It feels the tactile sensations. It does not touch them.

## U

**UEBERWEG,** the late esteemed Professor, of Königsberg. Discussion with him, II Understanding. The Ego or Spirit so called because it understands. It is in this sense that it can be called the substance (substantia) of Phenomenal Nature,—that which enables it to be produced.

**Uniformity of Nature,** an arbitrary arrangement. See Laws of Nature. How absurd the efforts to discover, and even to assert without discovering it, that the shape of birds' eggs, and the colour of the grass and all the other Laws of Nature are *a priori* principles!

**Universe.** Ours is the sensible or material Universe, consisting of Material Quali-



ties in their various groups, subsisting according to fixed laws. What our Opponents call the Universe is an insensible and immaterial sort of one, WITHOUT ANY MATERIAL QUALITIES WHATSOEVER, and placed, they think, outside the sensible one. *See* World; also *Externality*.

'Unperceived' has two significations—either 'not being present to some mind' (as, I do not perceive what is in the next room), or 'being of such a nature that no mind could perceive it, even if there were no obstacles in the way of its doing so' (as, one mind cannot perceive another). It is only in this latter sense that Berkeley uses it; and, so used, it is one of the most misleading expressions of the last century. It is said of things which are not 'Perceived Things,' not 'Mental Things,' of things whose nature, if they existed, would be 'Outside the Mind,' or 'Without the Mind.' *See* these expressions; also *Absolute Existence*. Things would be said to be 'unperceived' which were not Phenomena (or Ideas); for the Spirit perceives nothing else. So, in this sense of the term, we can know of nothing 'unperceived.' This is an *a priori* principle which all must understand clearly who seek to understand this great scientific Doctrine and what Berkeley has written on the subject.

## V

**VISIBLE, or Visual.** Nothing visible but sensations and their Qualities, and the Groups these form.

## W

**WILL.** The Ego or Spirit, so called because, in its search for the truth of things, it wills, chooses, or prefers. Will is also used to signify the act of the Will, which we call Choice; and some people, even in Scientific Treatises, speak of a free choice, as if in any but a relative sense and arbitrary sense there

could be a compelled choice. It ceases to be a choice when it is not free. It is only as far as the Spirit is free that it is called the Will; and it is only in proportion as it has knowledge that it is free. Thus Liberty is Power, and Knowledge is Power. Without Knowledge there is no Liberty, and without Liberty no Chooser or Will. But we must be careful not to confound the mere Liberty which makes material action possible with the Liberty which makes Choice possible.

'Within the Mind.' This phrase is the contrary of the following. A thing is said to be Within the powers of the Mind, or Within the Mind, not when we perceive it or think of it, but when it is a mental thing: when its nature brings it into relation with mind. The phrase has reference to the Essence of things, not to their Existence; and what is, by Nature and Essence, a Mental thing, can never be anything else but a Mental thing,—can never put off this character, whether it is present to the mind or not, *i.e.*, whether we are conscious of it or not. *See* *Externality and Mind*.

'Without the Mind' is an expression used in Berkeley's time for Outside the Mind, or Outside the powers of the Mind. It means also, in the same sense, Without the aid of Mind. A thing would be said to be Outside the Mind, or External to its Powers, which was not of a nature to be perceived or known of by anything and of course we know of no such thing. This means not only what is unknown to us, but what is unknowable to any order of Intelligence; and we may reasonably ask, why have we to speak of such a thing? xxvi.

World, external to our bodies, and its objects of sense, of which it consists, at vast and various distances from our bodies. No one ever denied the Existence of the External World except our Opponents—a tenet of their own Theory which renders them of course very unwilling to enter into controversy on this point of *Externality*. According to them, the sensible or material world is all lodged within our bodies. *See* *Externality and Matter*.

## END OF INDEX.









